Our Firm Foundation

The 7th Day Sabbath | Immutable Law of God | The Everlasting Gospel
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Vol. 8, No. 3 March 1993

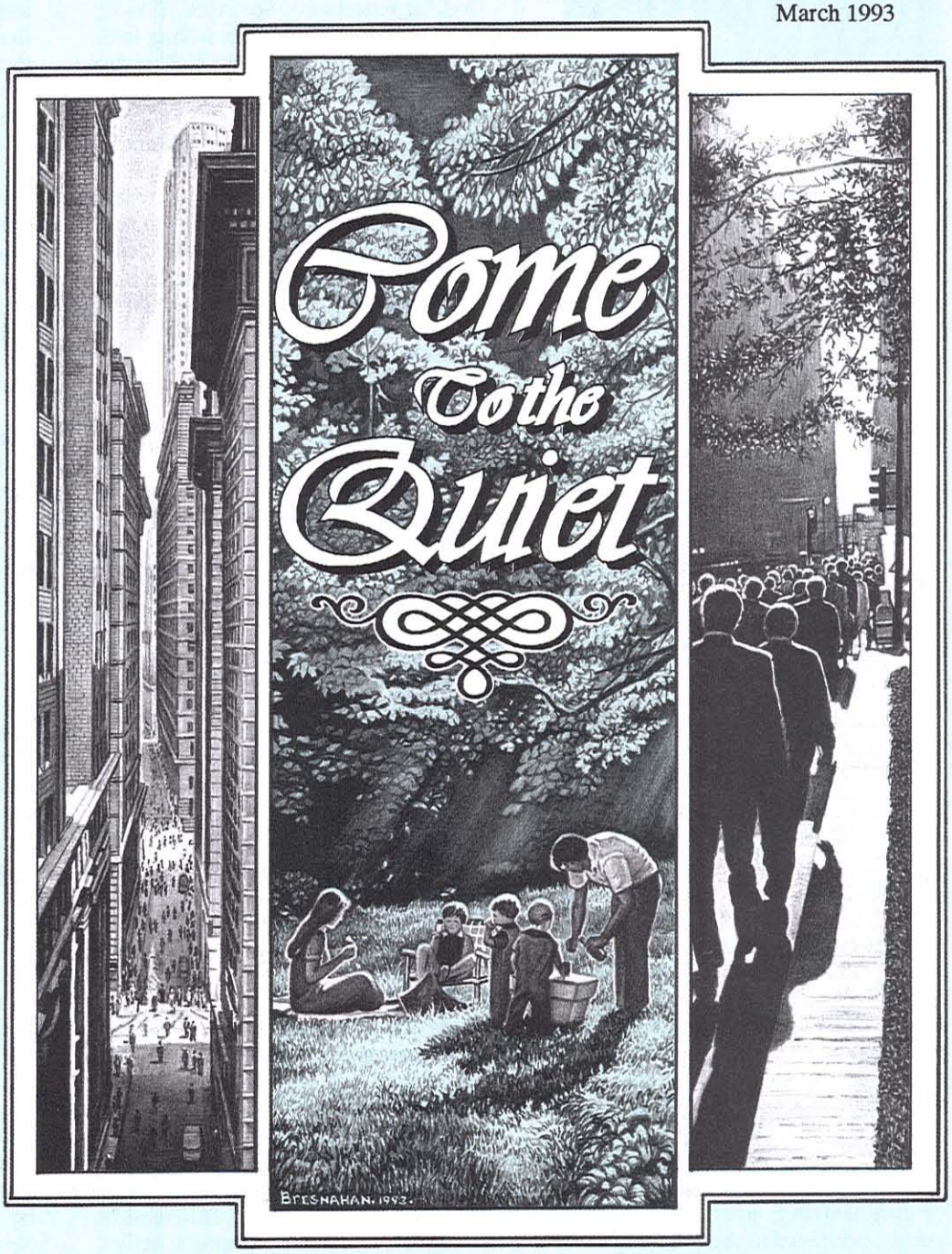
The Maginot Line of Adventism

The New Theology: A False Gospel

Special Ministries

True Religion

Christian Discipline



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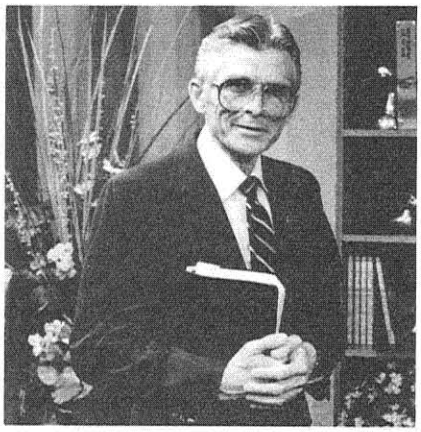

Editorial

WHAT is the gospel? The gospel is the manifestation of God's power to create and to recreate man is His own image. It is the saving power of God for those who believe in Jesus as their Saviour, and who are willing to be made willing to bring their will into obedience to all known truth. Truth and faith are vital; they are working partners in God's great plan to redeem the fallen race. Also the gospel makes men just and righteous, when truth is lovingly obeyed. We then can live by the faith of Jesus.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:16–17

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and Jesus is that power to save, because He is the Word. See John 1:12. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among men, that the righteousness of God might be revealed.

The righteousness of God is His character. It is what God does. It is His way, and to be restored to Eden and eternal life, man must make his way God's way. The gospel reveals His way to us. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are God's statement of His way of righteousness. This truth is summed up in His righteous law, the Ten Commandments.

God gave to the remnant church a special message for the end time; it is the re-emphasizing of the everlasting gospel, portrayed in the cleansing of the sanctuary, and in the three angels' messages, which show that justification and sanctification are the heart of the gospel.

The sinner can be justified only when he is so sorry for sin that he asks God for repentance. See Acts 5:31–32; 2 Corinthians 7:9–10. He is willing to be made willing to submit his will to the will of God in loving obedience to all truth (see *Steps to Christ*, 47; *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 52), and as he progresses in sanctification, the Holy Spirit is his Teacher and his Protector. Angels are his close companions to hold him in his relationship to Christ in justification. Then God can treat him as if he had never sinned. See *Steps to Christ*, 62. He is then justified by faith in Christ. Then Christ's perfect life can and will be imputed and imparted to the sinner's life, which brings peace and security even in adversity.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1

"Faith is simple in its operation and powerful in its results. Many professed Christians, who have a knowledge of the sacred Word, and believe its truth, fail in the childlike trust that is essential to the religion of Jesus. They do not reach out with that peculiar touch that brings the virtue of healing to the soul." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1074

Many Christians have never really experienced Jesus' faith. What a tragedy! Our only hope of salvation is through His faith in daily operation in the life, and no one can be justified while practicing known sin or neglecting known duty.

"But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul." *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, 366

The gospel then is God's perfect plan to restore man to his perfect Eden home, and to the tree of life. Let us not forget that one sin took Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden, and one sin unconfessed and unforsaken will keep any one from going back.

The heart of the gospel then is found in the cleansing of the sanctuary service, and the heart of the sanctuary message is the final atonement for man in the Most Holy Place. The cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven is directly related to the cleansing of our soul temple from all sin. When sinners understand this great principle of the gospel, then Jesus our High Priest will cleanse the Most Holy Place in heaven.

Let us not forget God's perfect, righteous law has been broken by all, for all have sinned. There is only one definition of sin, and that is transgression of His perfect law. 1 John 3:4. The heart of the law is Jesus' holy Sabbath. He is the Author of this sacred day, and it can be kept only by the faith of Jesus living in us moment by moment. This great truth is the gospel: keeping His holy day accordingly. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isaiah 58:13–14

The gospel, then, when obeyed in adoration for the Lawgiver will lead the believer to covet His perfect obedience to God's perfect law. This goal is the purpose and the complete fulfillment of the gospel.

"Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1118 □

Ron Spear—EDITOR

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—EDITORS

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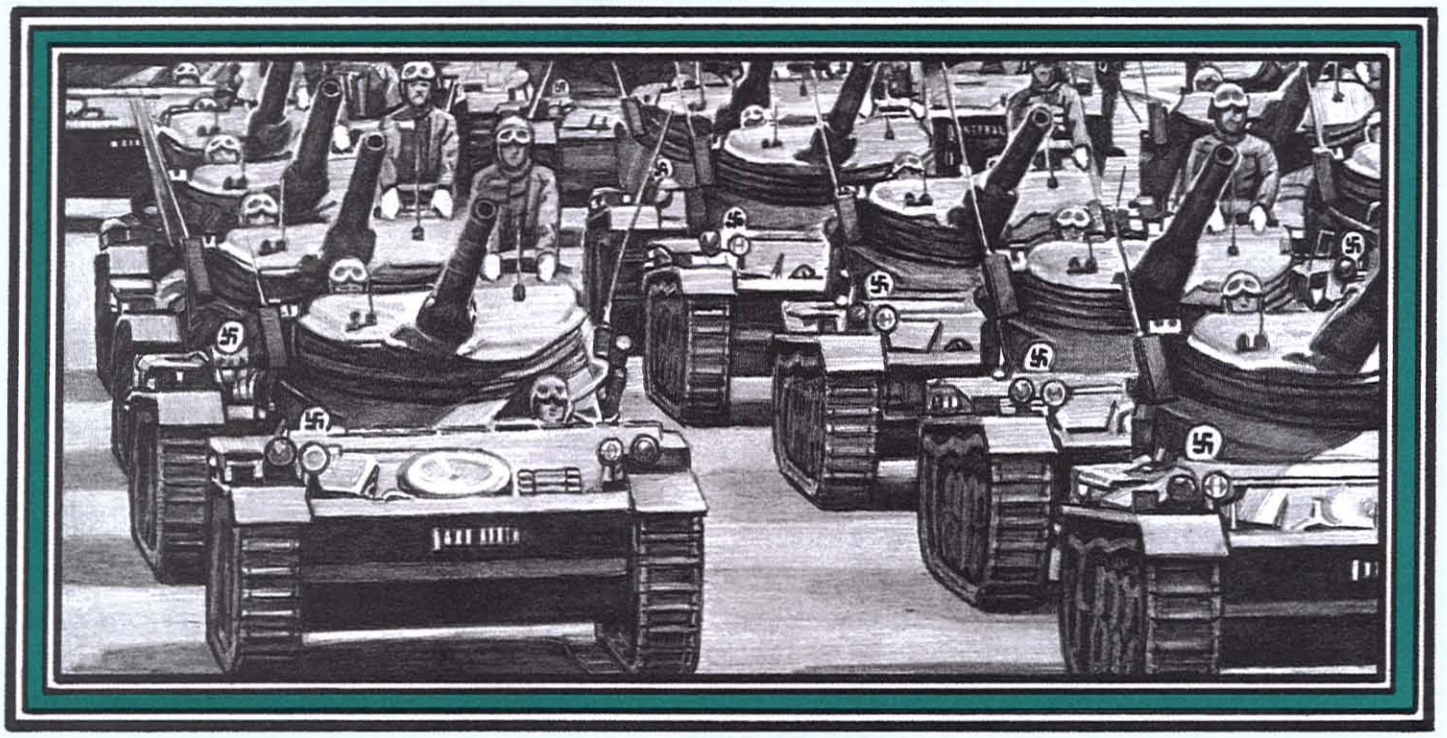
Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.



THE MAGINOT LINE OF ADVENTISM

IN 1929, French statesman André Louis-René Maginot became his country's minister of war. For eleven years he had urged his government to install a defensive military line on its eastern frontier, to insure that France would never again suffer invasion by the powers of central Europe. Now, at long last, his desire would be granted. From the Swiss to the Belgian border, earthmoving equipment cut a huge gash in the ground, into which went tank traps, concrete, and heavy guns. Whole military cities were buried beneath the soil of Alsace-Lorraine, a protective bulwark known to history as the Maginot Line.

But elaborate as this defensive shield was, it had one big problem. It was stationary. Its effectiveness depended entirely on the direction from which a future attack might come. None could foresee what would happen on the morning of May 10, 1940, when the German army struck, not through Alsace-Lorraine, as before, but through the hilly Ardennes forest, devouring Belgium, Holland, and eventually France. The Nazi blitzkrieg simply bypassed the Maginot Line, catching the Allies by complete surprise.

The Maginot Line of Adventism

It is the present writer's firm conviction that the modern Seventh-day Adventist Church has developed a spiritual Maginot Line. And like the French in 1940, we too have been caught by complete surprise.

On June 10, 1976, the *Review and Herald* ran a cover article with the title, "Let's Give the Pharisees a Rest."[1] I still remember, as a sixteen-year-old, removing the mail from our family mailbox and my eye catching this title, which sounded very much the way my young mind was perceiving the church's developing crisis. Before doing anything else, I sat in our living room and read the article. Immediately I could feel the author's and my heart beating in unison. Finally, someone else was noticing what I, even as a teen-ager, recognized as a dangerous trend within the church.

The author, then professor of communications at Southern Missionary College, observed that "We constantly hear polemics, sermons, talks, articles, snide allusions, and letters to the editor berating Pharisees and pharisaism. While not denying the destructive impact and misguided notions produced by pharisaism, he maintained: "Yet, as I have observed large-city pastorates and college and university campuses, I do not fear a resurgence of rigid ultralegalism." Proceeding to cite the more obvious modern pitfalls of "intellectual elitism" and "an ever-burgeoning spirit of worldliness, which relegates the counsels of God to another era," he further stated, "We tend to reject or explain away those revelations which call for hard, stern battles with self, Spartan discipline, and rejection of certain current or popular views. This selective acceptance seems especially prevalent in regard to God's messages to His remnant church through Ellen G. White." The professor concluded, "Honestly now, is pharisaism, an excessive care in keeping the law, really our problem? Or are we plagued with the curse of Sadduceeism, selective acceptance of revelation, eager compliance with current trends, materialism?"[2]

If this article made sense sixteen years ago, it makes even more sense today. The obsession of Adventism's popular speakers and writers with the dangers of legalism has continued unabated, despite overwhelming evidence that liberalism, worldliness, and self-indulgence dominate the contemporary church. Strangely enough, this obsession is not found only among those who could fairly be described as

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Kevin Paulson, an avid student of Scripture as it relates to current events, writes from Redlands, California.

Kevin Paulson

liberals, or those who embrace what has come to be known as the New Theology. Among those who commonly promote the historical and theological issues connected with the 1888 message, one frequently finds a strong emphasis on the perils of legalism. Such speakers often remind historic Adventists that those who rejected God's message at Minneapolis a century ago were also historic Adventists in their theology and lifestyle. Such statements may indeed serve as humbling reminders to conservative Adventists who may be tempted to rest on their theoretical laurels. But in making such statements, one must always be mindful of the audience being addressed. If remarks like these are made before a group of largely conservative Adventists, that is one thing. But if, by contrast, they are made on a North American Adventist college campus, where liberal intellectualism and worldliness far exceed legalism as the dominant features of apostasy, one is led to question the wisdom of such an emphasis. One Adventist scholar who likes to think of himself as conservative, delights in telling students and church members in the very liberal Adventist community where he lives, that the murderers of Christ were health-reforming, tithe-paying Sabbathkeepers. It is true, of course. But it is difficult not to regard such statements as seriously ill-advised in a community where health reform, consistent tithing, and faithful Sabbath observance are widely treated with scholarly disdain, ridicule and scorn.

We would do well to remember the experience of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, when He publicly read from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah. Ellen White speaks of how He deliberately left out a certain portion of the text, one commonly misapplied by those present. Recounting the story, she writes, "Having read the words, 'To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,' He omitted the phrase, 'and the day of vengeance of our God.' Isaiah 61:2. This was just as much truth as was the first of the prophecy, and by His silence Jesus did not deny the truth. But this last expression was that upon which His hearers delighted to dwell, and which they were desirous of fulfilling."[3] Indeed, danger signals should always flash in the Christian's mind when religious themes become popular. God's Word gives every indication that truth will never be popular, either in the church or the world. And few can escape the fact that preaching against legalism has become very popular in the Anglo-Saxon Adventist Church. And dare we ask whether this popular emphasis has produced a greater interest in holiness, greater faithfulness to God's standards as revealed in Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, greater attentiveness to inspired counsel in the management of our institutions? Dare we ask, indeed!

While differences of time and place never justify tampering with the substance of divine truth, the manner in which truth is stated may vary, depending on the situation to which truth is addressed. Paul wrote very differently to the adulterers in Corinth than he did to the legalists in Galatia. The gospel he preached was the same, to be sure. But the areas of emphasis were clearly different. By the same token, neither a graduate degree nor a host of long arguments is needed to demonstrate that the Adventist Church to which the 1888 message was first addressed was a fundamentally different place from the Adventist Church of today. Among other reasons, the world in which the church found itself at that time was a radically different place. American and Western culture a hundred years ago was still very much a world of daring pioneers, courageous missionaries who fearlessly braved oceans and jungles, and a society where—for most people —hard work on a scale rarely appreciated in our present context, was essential to sustain even a modicum of comfort. This does not mean, of course, that self-indulgence and moral looseness were not powerful forces in that time as in ours. But these were not as much a part of accepted culture then as they are now. People had to work much harder in those days for things most people now take for granted. It is therefore easy to understand how the spirit of legalistic self-sufficiency could flourish in such a culture, as distinct from a culture characterized by credit cards, quick prosperity and medicines promising instant relief.

The Bottom Line of Legalism

To return to our illustration at the beginning, the Maginot Line would probably have failed in protecting France, even if the Germans had struck from that direction. The protracted trench warfare of the First World War, from which perspective the Maginot Line was constructed, bore little resemblance to the tractored panzers and coordinated air power of World War II. Not only had the French miscalculated the direction from which a future attack might come; they had also failed to anticipate the nature of the attack. Both miscalculations were responsible for their defeat in 1940.

By the same token, modern Adventists have not only concluded, mistakenly, that pharisaic legalism would be the church's great danger at the close of time; they have also fundamentally misunderstood what legalism is—and what it is not. The first mistake should have been easy enough to avoid. Nearly every Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy description of the church's state at the end of time focuses on laxity, careless living, and permissiveness as the primary apostate conditions. Ellen White in particular makes it quite obvious when she describes legalistic tendencies as distinct from the other kind, speaking at one point of how the church had "preached the law until we are dry as the hills of Gilboa."[4] Nowhere does she indicate that such preaching will be the church's big problem just before Jesus comes. When describing the Papacy's universal appeal, she makes an even clearer distinction: "It [Catholicism] is prepared for two classes of mankind, embracing

Modern Adventists have not only concluded mistakenly that pharisaic legalism would be the church's great danger at the close of time; they have also fundamentally misunderstood what legalism is—and what it is not

nearly the whole world—those who would be saved by their merits, and those who would be saved in their sins."[5] The Sacred Record indicates that not only has the latter viewpoint been the more dominant through the course of history, but that it will also be the more dominant when the world confronts its final test.

Some will point to an Ellen White statement which speaks of how "the trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ."[6] The assumption is thus made that because the Jews at the time of Jesus' first coming were excessively preoccupied with law-keeping, we can expect the church before His second coming to be plagued by similar problems. But a closer look at the context of this statement, together with similar passages by the same author, gives a much broader picture of the church's predicament at both times. Here and elsewhere, Ellen White is speaking in general terms of spiritual rebellion and a refusal to heed divine counsel. In no way can the above statement, when combined with the totality of Ellen White's emphasis and counsels to the church at the end of time, be construed to imply that the obsessive law-keeping of the pharisaic brand will be the church's principal danger in the final conflict.

But what is the bottom line of legalism as described in the Bible? I believe that three pivotal statements, made by three of the most decisive New Testament voices, will provide the answer. Addressing the scribes and Pharisees on the banks of the Jordan, John the Baptist declared: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. " Matthew 3:7–10[7]

Twenty chapters later, speaking to the same group, Jesus declared: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. . . . Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of extortion and rapacity. You blind Pharisee! first cleanse the inside of the cup and of the plate, that the outside also may be clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Matthew 23:2–3; 23–28

The apostle Paul expressed similar concerns in his controversy with the Judaizers: "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." Romans 2:13

Two major characteristics stand out in the above descriptions of first-century legalism:

1. Superficial holiness. The above verses make a number of statements which indicate the superficial nature of legalistic, pharisaical righteousness. One of the most significant of these is John the Baptist's warning that mere biological descent from Abraham was not enough to assure God's favor. The necessity of this warning can hardly be overstated, especially in view of the divisive struggles later years would witness over the role of Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church. Commenting on the Jewish attitude toward this question before and during the time of Christ, Ellen White observes: "They [the Jews] did not become the light of the world, but shut themselves away from the world in order to escape temptation to idolatry. . . . The Jews looked upon Jerusalem as their heaven, and they were actually jealous lest the Lord should show mercy to the Gentiles."[8]

"Philosophers endeavored to study into the mystery of the Hebrew economy. But the bigotry of the Jews hindered the spread of the light. Intent on maintaining the separation between themselves and other nations, they were unwilling to impart the knowledge they still possessed concerning the symbolic service."[9]

We soon begin to understand that the legalism of which the Jews were so guilty was as much a matter of righteousness by heredity as by behavior—perhaps more so. For this class, merely being a Jew was sufficient to secure salvation. The Jewish community is not totally devoid of this mentality even today. I well remember a panel discussion by a group of clergymen on television some years ago. The topic for the afternoon was the punishment of the wicked, and each panelist presented different theological views. A Jewish rabbi was present, but he remained silent through most of the discussion. Finally, toward the end, he was asked for his opinion. With total seriousness he stated that the issue in question really did not matter to him, because according to his understanding of Judaism, no Jew was going to hell anyway.

Jesus, of course, spoke most strongly regarding superficial holiness when He condemned the Pharisees for not practicing what they preached (Matthew 23:3), and for appearing outwardly righteous while remaining corrupt within (verses 25–28). No better description of legalism could apply in any age. Paul's comment in Romans 2 about hearers and doers calls to mind another inspired description of legalism, one which also denotes superficiality: "The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness."[10]

The legalism of which the Jews were so guilty was as much a matter of righteousness by heredity as by behavior—perhaps more so

2. Selective holiness. Holiness that is superficial is inevitably selective. This fact is obvious, for complete holiness is possible only when the heart and life are totally surrendered to divine power. Jesus described selective holiness when He spoke of how the Pharisees paid tithe of seasoning herbs while omitting the weightier matters of the law (Matthew 23:23–24). We read elsewhere that "by the Babylonish captivity the Israelites were effectually cured of the worship of graven images."[11] Sadly, it seems to have been the only aspect of law-breaking of which they were cured. The post-exilic history of the Jewish nation offers tragic evidence that most of the apostate conditions which brought about the captivity continued through the centuries which followed.

Here we discover the ultimate trademark of every false religion. Whether that religion wears the mask of rigid piety, as did that of the Pharisees, or the mask of cheap grace, like so much of contemporary Adventism, the end result is that the unconverted heart hangs on to its favorite sins. Like the extremes of right and left in politics, the false gospels of legalism and cheap grace eventually bear a striking similarity. Ellen White declares that "The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin."[12] Why does such a religion offer no barrier against sin? Because legalism, like every devilish counterfeit, inevitably involves the cherishing of some sin. And as the prophet writes elsewhere, "Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel."[13]

Perhaps even more than first-century Judaism, the story of Catholicism during the Middle Ages graphically illustrates how vice, self-indulgence, and cruelty can flourish beneath a mask of religiosity. The lurid history of medieval Christianity is not so much a tale of believers trying hard to be good as a tale of people doing exactly as they pleased while claiming to be Christians on account of certain forms and ceremonies kept meticulously intact. Such practices as penance and the sale of indulgences are perhaps the best examples of this inconsistency. By kissing engravings of the cross while ascending "Pilate's staircase," or by joining a crusade to butcher Waldenses in the Piedmont valley, one could absolve himself of guilt for many, if not all, sins committed thereafter. Such theology is not far removed from the "umbrella" of forensic justification taught by many contemporary Adventists,[14] described by some as "overarching forgiveness,"[15] under which a multitude of sins continue unabated. Of this striking similarity of principle between legalism and the gospel of cheap grace, some have concluded that every alternative to the biblical gospel must therefore be characterized as legalism. But regardless of the sincerity (and to some degree, the accuracy) of such observations, this use of terminology often results in great confusion for the listener. To begin with, while the inspired pen does speak of works-righteousness as the foundation of every heathen religion, we nowhere read that every decision to rebel against God is motivated by the desire to work one's way to heaven. We need also to remember another inspired statement quoted earlier, one which speaks of "two classes of mankind, embracing nearly the whole world—those who would be saved by their merits, and those who would be saved in their sins."[16] However similar these two philosophies may be at the bottom line, their expression in religious belief and practice is often very different. It is therefore best to follow the example of Inspiration in using different language to describe these different systems of thought.

We need to remember, throughout this discussion, Ellen White's repeated declaration that the central issue in the great controversy is over whether God's law can in fact be obeyed.[17] Unless our terms are defined very carefully, people can become very confused if we say that faith versus works is the central issue. The only reason Satan uses legalism to ensnare a certain class is that he knows the end result will be disobedience to God's law. We can be sure that Satan receives no great thrill watching people pay attention to God's commandments, for whatever reason. The legalistic attention to law-keeping serves his purpose only because the end result is law breaking. In her description of Jewish legalism, Ellen White points out this fact:

"With all their minute and burdensome injunctions, it was an impossibility to keep the law. Those who desired to serve God, and who tried to observe the rabbinical precepts, toiled under a heavy burden. They could find no rest from the accusings of a troubled conscience. Thus Satan worked to discourage the people, to lower their conception of the character of God, and to bring the faith of Israel into contempt. He hoped to establish the claim put forth when he rebelled in heaven—that the requirements of God were unjust, and could not be obeyed. Even Israel, he declared, did not keep the law."[18]

A word of clarification should be offered regarding the definition of legalism as man striving in his own strength to obey God. This definition is correct, of course. Ellen White observes: "The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation, is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin, but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God."[19] Striving in one's own strength is the inevitable result of selective holiness, since only a heart fully surrendered to God's revealed will experiences God's converting power. But we must also remember that few who strive in their own strength actually believe that is what they are doing. Few Christians consciously believe they can be good without God. Cain certainly desired the power of God in his life; else he probably would not have bothered bringing a sacrifice at all. In Christ's parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the Pharisee thanked God, not himself, that he was not like other men (Luke

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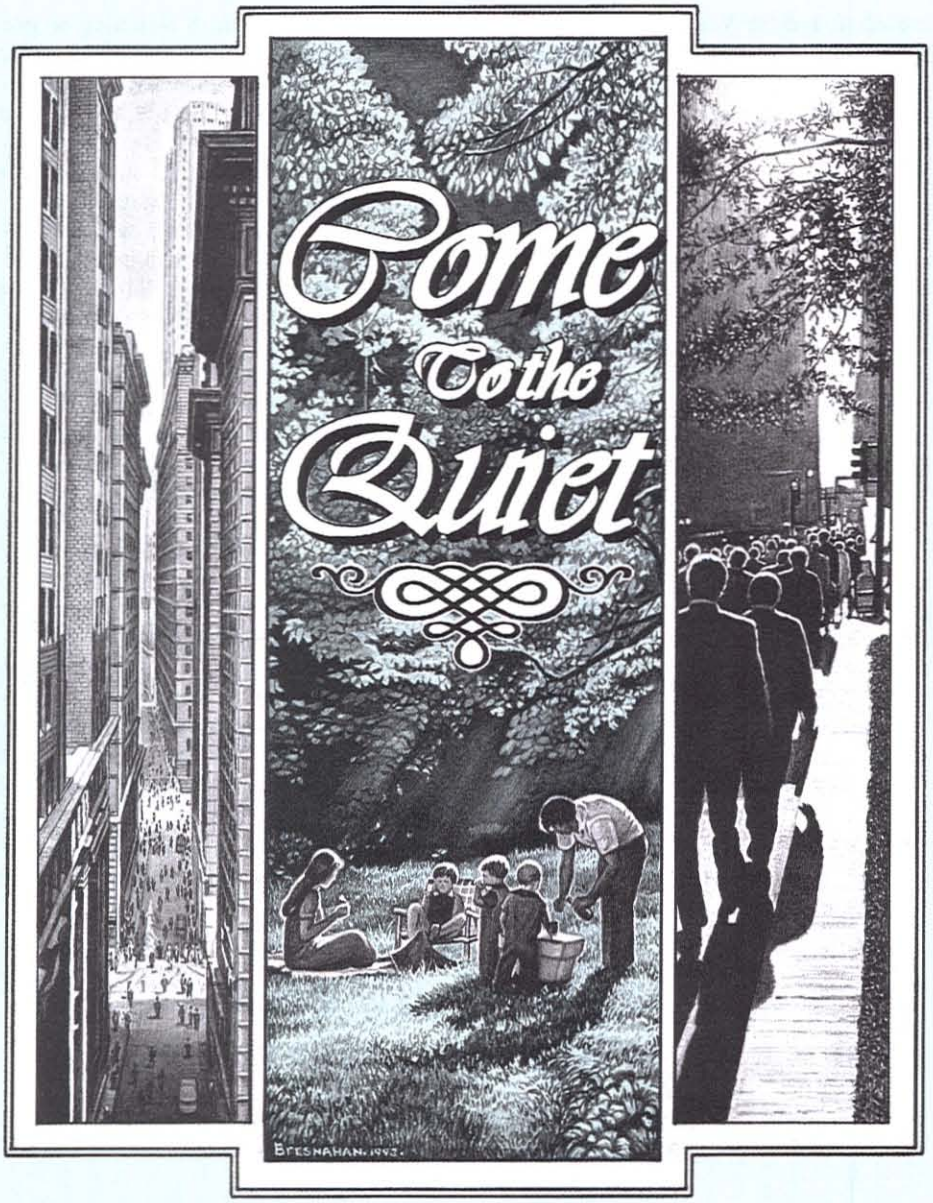
The legalistic attention to law-keeping serves Satan's purpose only because the end result is law-breaking



A question we must all ask ourselves is, Does where we live have a significant impact upon our mental, physical and spiritual health and welfare? I believe it does, and I also believe it can be easily seen from common-sense, present-day facts, and biblical example.

Common sense, which I believe is uncommon nowadays, will lead us to ask questions such as this: If the city environment is the healthiest for us, why then do so many seek to escape from it for their weekends, holidays and vacations? I live in northwestern Montana, where my home looks out on Glacier National Park. Last year about two and one-half million visitors passed through this crown of the continent, with its diverse wildlife, crystal-clear mountain lakes and streams and awesome, snow-covered, majestic peaks. Here millions come every year to find that rest, solitude and tranquility absent in the city life. All year long the stress, tension, fatigue, rush and scurry builds, and it is in places like this where the masses of mankind seek to unwind.

How much more conducive to their mental, physical and spiritual well-being would it be for these families, if they would find a few quiet country acres, thirty or forty minutes from the hustle and bustle of the city, and there establish their island of refuge and rest. Perhaps just four or five acres with some trees, a little garden and some room to breathe free. Here the children will be free from the uncontrollable neighborhood associations which prove detrimental to their character development. Here they will be free to explore the mysteries of nature and nature's God, rather than the worldliness and evils of the city. Here they will be shielded from temptation and be trained and educated for usefulness.

In the city, the children, having nothing to do when not in school, obtain a street education. From worldly associates they acquire habits of vice that may take a lifetime to undo. All of us have seen the results of such associations, but few of us realize the importance of shunning, so far as possible, all associations unfriendly to our and our children's physical, mental and spiritual well-being. I believe it has become self-evident, the world over, that cities have become hotbeds of vice. On every hand are the sights and sounds and tastes of evil. Everywhere are the enticements to sensuality and dissipation. There is no question that the tide of corruption and crime is swelling to unprecedented levels. Every day brings the news of violence, robberies, murders, suicides and crimes unnameable.

While on a recent journey I had the opportunity to visit my home town, a relatively small city of 60,000. Here my mother cautioned me not to allow my wife to go to the grocery store alone, especially at night, nor to allow my two boys to walk around the block unchaperoned. Why? Because women and children had been abducted just a few blocks from where I had been raised. How absurd! I thought. I used to walk these streets unencumbered as a youth growing up. But not any more, not even in this middle-class neighborhood of my youth.

In comparison to a country setting, life in the cities, even small ones, is false and artificial. There is an intense, overwhelming passion for money getting, a continuous whirl of excitement and pleasure seeking, a thirst for display, luxury and extravagance; all these are forces that, with the great majority of mankind, are turning the mind from life's true purpose. They have opened the door to a thousand evils, and upon our youth and even upon us adults they have an almost irresistible power.

Jim and Sally Hohnberger, of Restoration International, live in Polebridge, Montana, and they have dedicated their lives full time to reaching all people with the practical gospel.

Jim Hohnberger

What of the physical surroundings in the cities? Are they not a peril to health? There is a constant liability to contact with disease, a definite prevalence of foul, smelly air, not to mention the heavily treated, chemicalized impure water.

It was certainly not God's purpose that His people should be crowded into cities, huddled together like sardines in homes and apartment complexes. No, in the beginning God placed our first parents, Adam and Eve, amid beautiful sights and sounds, the same as He desires us to live in today. My wife and I have found that the more nearly we come into harmony with God's original plan of life, the more favorable it has been for us to secure health of body, mind, and soul for us and for our two teen-age boys. What a blessing it has been for us to move to our country setting!

The Lord would have us appreciate the need to move to the country, and yet not become discouraged if the way does not open immediately before us.

"The angels of mercy hurried Lot and his wife and daughters by taking hold of their hands. Had Lot hastened as the Lord desired him to, his wife would not have become a pillar of salt. Lot had too much of a lingering spirit. Let us not be like him. The same voice that warned Lot to LEAVE Sodom bids us, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean.' 2 Corinthians 6:17. Those who obey this warning will find a refuge. Let every man be wide awake for himself, and try to save his family. Let him gird himself for the work. *God will reveal from point to point what to do next.*" *Selected Messages*, book 2, 354; emphasis supplied in all quotations

"More and more, as time advances, our people will have to leave the cities. For years we have been instructed that our brethren and sisters, and especially families with children, should plan to leave the cities as the way opens before them to do so. *Many will have to labor earnestly to help open the way.* But until it is possible for them to leave, so long as they remain, they should be most active in doing missionary work, however limited their sphere of influence may be. As they yield their talents and their all to God to be used as He may direct; as they live out their consecration by engaging in practical missionary work wherever opportunity affords, God will bless them with wisdom and discretion, and in His own way and time He will make it possible for them to place themselves where they will not be surrounded constantly with the contaminating influences of modern city life." *Review and Herald*, vol. 5, 278

In the country we have cut off every influence and sundered every tie imperiling the two precious souls committed to our care. Here we are bringing them up in the admonition and the instruction of the Lord. Here their mother and father work together in a home-schooling setting to train and educate them for true usefulness. And when not being schooled in the academics, they are being trained in all the household tasks and duties, such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, car maintenance, cooking, cleaning and gardening. For recreation, they are involved in the quiet, natural, noncompetitive sports, such as cross-country skiing, backpacking, mountain-climbing, caving, camping, canoeing, wildlife photography, all with a moral-spiritual emphasis. Such a life of natural wholesome adventure awaits them. How truly invigorating this way of life is to their overall development! This lifestyle is as God would have it, for in the beginning, "God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." Genesis 2:8. God is again entreating all to "Come to the Quiet."

Genesis recounts the parallel of the lives of two men: Abraham and Lot. See Genesis chapters 12–19. Here God calls Abraham to leave the influence of his idolatrous countrymen to go dwell in the land of Canaan. We are told that Lot went with him, but instead of dwelling in the land of Canaan, he dwelled in the cities of the plain, "and Lot . . . pitched his tent toward Sodom." Genesis 13:12. But friends, the men of Sodom were wicked, and the wickedness of that city was the downfall of Lot's family. The city became so wicked that God saw it was necessary to destroy it. But in His great mercy He desired to save Lot and his family, and sent angels to rescue them. Lot pleaded with his daughters, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city." Genesis 19:14. But his own daughters and sons-in-law mocked him. They had grown too accustomed to the evil of Sodom. Friends, God is saying to us again today, "Up, get you out of these places." Will you listen? Will you, for the welfare of your children and spouse, escape these centers of crime? Or are you going to laugh as did Lot's children and lose your life there? Sisters, are you going to mourn over having to leave these places, as did Lot's wife? Remember, "His wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Genesis 19:26. Her heart was still in Sodom; she still longed for the shopping malls, the extravagance, the chitchat and the supposed ease of that city.

Friends, God is saying to us again today, "Up, get you out of these places." Will you listen? Will you, for the welfare of your children and spouse, escape these centers of crime?

Perhaps Lot, as do some today, might have justified living in Sodom so as to evangelize it. But friends, how effective was Lot's evangelism? Not even ten righteous persons could be found in all of Sodom. Genesis 18:32. Lot was the only "righteous" person in Sodom. He not only failed in evangelizing Sodom, but Sodom evangelized and killed his family.

Before it is too late, let us gather our families out of the wicked influences of the cities and, like Abraham, raise them a safe distance from the Sodoms of today. The results are clearly recorded for us in Scripture. When Lot entered Sodom, he fully intended to keep himself from its iniquity. But he failed, miserably failed. His only posterity were the two tribes, the Moabites and the Ammonites, which came from incest with his only two daughters who escaped Sodom with him. Two vile, idolatrous tribes, rebels against God. How terrible were the results that followed one unwise step! Yet Lot could have preserved his family and wife from many evils, had he shunned the city, as did Abraham. All the good that Lot and his family did in Sodom could have been done by them, even if they had lived a

great distance away from the city. Abraham walked with God, and yet he did not live in the midst of any city, polluted with every kind of violence and wickedness, as did Lot in Sodom.

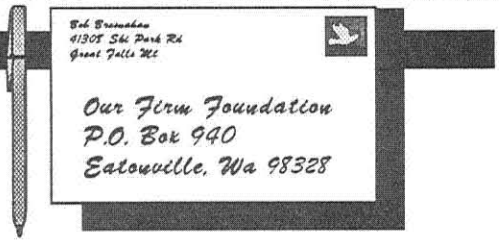
I would like to share a statement from a letter my wife and I received recently. It reads as follows: "We won't be going places much, because even now traffic is terrific. Lots of accidents. Later it will even be worse. Papers are loaded with every kind of misdemeanors, drugs, political corruption, shootings, unsolved murders, drug abuses. It's bad, bad and seems worse because everything is made public; not a thing is hushed up. In other states there's as much and more but you only hear half of what's going on. That's what is amazing here; police, sirens, helicopters all day long, really weird, but I'm getting used to it. Even with security guards it's a testy deal, not only at night but in broad daylight."

"But I'm getting used to it." I fear that is the story of most people; they have become used to it. But God is saying to us all: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, [country setting] lest thou be consumed." Genesis 19:17

Friends, let us not argue with the plain facts; let us use uncommon sense; let us learn from Lot's mistake, avail ourselves of God's appointed means, and get away from the cities to save our families, before it is too late. Will you not "Come to the Quiet"? □

For a complete set of seven tapes on the spiritual and the practical aspects of country-living send $14.00 to Jim and Sally Hohnberger, Star Route, Polebridge, MT 59928

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Thank you for the "Hope Liberty News." I am so glad to see you are printing what we need to know today in keeping with Bible prophecy. Mrs. White also predicted everything that is happening right now.

If we are rooted and grounded in the truth, nothing can change that; if we are not seeing the times we are living in, then nothing can change that either. We have been told our greatest enemies will be those from within. May the Lord continue to bless you and your wonderful staff.
—LB, Florida

Praise God for *Our Firm Foundation*! It has been a great blessing to me ever since I joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, five-and-a-half years ago. I am the editor of a church newsletter, and your magazine has proven helpful in compiling material for my articles.

I was very sad and rather shocked to read the North American Division's "Action on Private Organizations" in the December 3 *Adventist Review*. Surely our church leadership is in confusion as to just what is dividing the church. Our own local church has suffered division over this subject, with some members going so far as to ask that their names be dropped from our membership.

Yesterday I received the latest edition of your newsletter. Enclosed with it was another newsletter entitled "Hope Liberty News." Let me tell you, I have been waiting all my Christian life for such a newsletter! I hope this will be a regular addition to your Hope International newsletter.

I appreciate your ministry very much. Keep up the good work. There are a lot of people praying for you out here.
—MT, Pennsylvania

We are thankful for the many positive responses we have received regarding the "Hope Liberty News" section of our newsletter. Our present plans are to include this section on a bimonthly basis.—EDITORS

After reading about the action taken by General Conference leadership, I have decided to give you my support. I am not only a reader of *Our Firm Foundation*, but also a supporter of your defense of the Spirit of Prophecy in upholding the standards which are dragging in the dust.

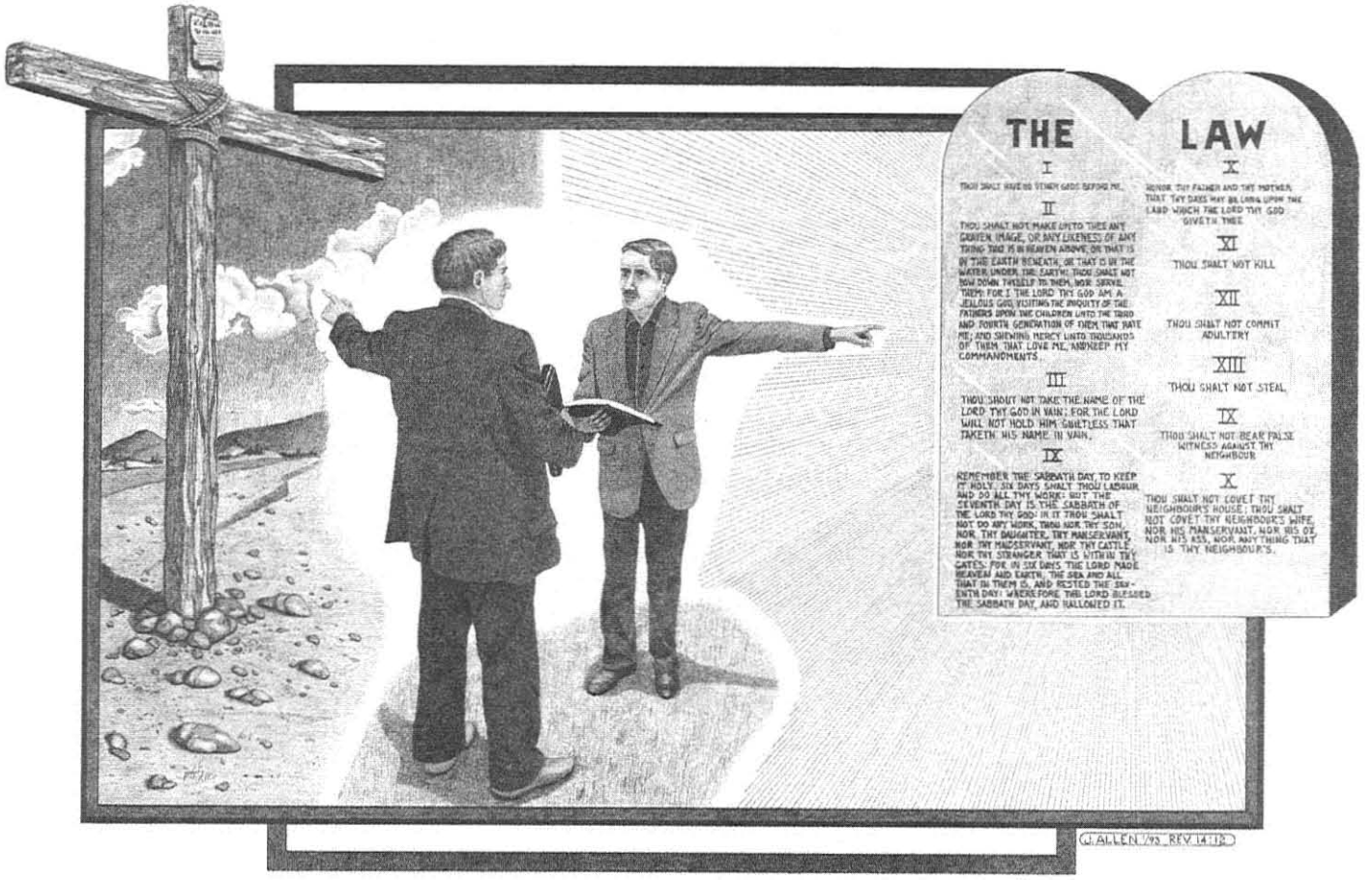
May God bless you and help you in your work in defending the truths for our times.
—AY, Ohio

For several years and longer I have been greatly concerned about our church's turning away from our basic teachings. I had never heard of *Our Firm Foundation*, so the church cannot blame you dear people for my concerns. I thought I was the only one who knew and felt deep concern for the actions of the church. A dear friend said, "I have a little paper that will help you." God bless you for your paper. Please send a one-year gift subscription to my son-in-law.
—MP, Texas

Enclosed is a donation which we are sending for your organization in the hope that it will be used wherever needed most.

Because we love God's church as we believe you do, we are glad that you apprise your readers of necessary information, but we want you to know that we really appreciate your focusing on the gospel and outreach, instead of attacking church leaders. Your ministry appears to have a right spirit, which is just as important as having a right theology.
—CC, California

We are enjoying the truth we find in your magazine and newsletter. We have watched the church quickly going downhill ever since we joined in 1968. It distresses us that when we go to church we leave entertained but not spiritually uplifted. At ages 70 and 75, we don't have any time to fool around, and we do want to be with Christ.
—AS, Texas


THE
LAW
I
THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.
II
THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH: THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN THYSELF TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM: FOR I THE LORD THY GOD AM A JEALOUS GOD, VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME; AND SHEWING MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS OF THEM THAT LOVE ME, AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.
III
THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN: FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.
IV
REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR, AND DO ALL THY WORK: BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD: IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK, THOU, NOR THY SON, NOR THY DAUGHTER, THY MANSERVANT, NOR THY MAIDSERVANT, NOR THY CATTLE, NOR THY STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES: FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY: WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SABBATH DAY, AND HALLOWED IT.
V
HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER: THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.
VI
THOU SHALT NOT KILL.
VII
THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.
VIII
THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.
IX
THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR.
X
THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE; THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MANSERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOUR'S.
J. ALLEN '93 REV. 14:12

The New Theology: A False Gospel

FOR a number of years the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been plagued with a false gospel called the New Theology. What is it? What does it mean to Seventh-day Adventist Christians?

First of all, we must believe that Satan has come down with great wrath, for he knows he has a very short time before probation closes for the whole human race. He is especially interested in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its special Heaven-sent messages to the world. He knows that Revelation 13, 14, and 17, identify the beast power, the antichrist. He knows that Revelation 14:9–12 is a warning that must be given by voice and pen in the loud cry. He also knows that the three angels' messages and the cleansing of the sanctuary are the messages that will prepare a people to give the final demonstration to the world. This demonstation will show what God can do with fallen human beings, when they are willing to be made willing to yield their will to God in loving obedience to His righteous law without compromise. See *Evangelism*, 190–196

Therefore the father of all lies has set out, with all his demons, to delay this event which will bring the great controversy to an end. This demon is a master counterfeiter. He has counterfeited everything God has done. The Sabbath and the state of the dead are prime examples of his deceit. Billions of souls who have believed his counterfeits have followed him, to their eternal doom.

His greatest counterfeit, I believe, is his counterfeit gospel that he has foisted on the world since sin first began. What does this false gospel say? It says one can be saved in sin instead of from sin as the Bible teaches. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people *from their sins.*" Matthew 1:21; emphasis supplied

Jesus came to our sin-cursed world for one reason: because of a broken law demanding the death of the law-breaker. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

"For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus

Ron Spear

Christ our Lord. Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 6:16–7:7

The only way we can identify sin is by the law. Our prophet Ellen White says that there is but one definition and that is found in 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

All law-breakers are therefore condemned by the broken law to eternal death. Jesus, our Creator, offered Himself as our Redeemer, and stepped between the law-breaker and His righteous law. He accepted the death penalty that was ours, so that sinners could have a second chance to prove their willing obedience to the law with the help of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus would send to all who are seeking after righteousness.

"Christ came to the world to counteract Satan's falsehood that God had made a law which men could not keep. Taking humanity upon Himself, He came to this earth, and by a life of obedience showed that God has not made a law that man cannot keep. He showed that it is possible for man perfectly to obey the law. Those who accept Christ as their Saviour, becoming partakers of His divine nature, are enabled to follow His example, living in obedience to every precept of the law. Through the merits of Christ, man is to show by his obedience that he could be trusted in heaven." *The Faith I Live By*, 114

The master demon, the father of all lies, has through his false gospel deceived billions to believe that the law of God cannot be kept, that God did away with the law at Calvary, and that now we are under grace and not under the law. This is the devil's master lie. If it were true, why did Christ come to earth, taking our degenerate, fallen humanity, and risking His position as the Son of God? See *The Desire of Ages*, 117, 49; Romans 1:3; 8:3

Let us remember, if Jesus had failed to live a perfect life, if He had broken the law just once, He would have been in the same position as Adam and Eve, a sinner. And the whole human race would have perished. There would have been no salvation; Satan's charge that the law could not be kept would have finally swept the whole universe into rebellion. We can never comprehend what John 3:16 means to us, not even after we have enjoyed eternity for a billion years. God the Father and His Son risked everything to save us, and by His Son's life of obedience to the law has now made it possible for us to follow His example in obedience to the law. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter 2:21–24

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:8–9

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:5–6

If the law could have been changed, Christ would have done that in Eden. Then Jesus would have reprimanded Adam and Eve and sent them back into their garden home. But such a move would have been a contradiction of His character. Had God done such a thing, it would have opened the floodgates of sin and woe to the whole universe. The only way God could solve the sin problem was to offer His Son, the Creator of man, to be his Substitute in the death which the broken law demanded of him. But, by His perfect obedience to the law, He would open the way for fallen man to be redeemed by following His example in perfect law-keeping by the power of the Holy Spirit working successfully in the life to keep man from sin.

When preachers tell us we will be sinning and confessing without overcoming until Jesus comes, we can be sure that they are adherents of the New Theology and are denying the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy

When preachers tell us we will be sinning and confessing without overcoming until Jesus comes, we can be sure that they are adherents of the New Theology and are denying the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy, which clearly assert that there is power to keep the law perfectly. David understood this divine, eternal concept of righteousness and obedience. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Psalm 119:11. See Psalm 119:33, 44, 60, 77, 165, 174

John also speaks to us: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2:3–4. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." 1 John 5:18. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever

sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that commiteth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:6–9

The New Is Really Old

The New Theology is really old theology. It has been in existence since sin began. It is the devil's master counterfeit of the gospel, and it is eternal death to all who accept it. The apostle John met it in his day; it was the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. See Revelation 2:6–15

"The doctrine is now largely taught that the Gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by 'believing' we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned." *Signs of the Times*, vol. 3, 363

Paul writes these words regarding perfect law-keeping by the power of the Holy Spirit. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? . . .

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. . . .

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. . . .

"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. . . .

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Romans 6:1–2, 6–7, 11–12, 18, 22

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Romans 8:37

"Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:22–23

"Now unto him that is able to do exeeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Ephesians 3:20

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan

The apostle John quoted Jesus' words to the woman taken in adultery: "Go, and sin no more." John 8:11

Matthew tells us that the New Theology is a lie in these words of Jesus. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48

Peter also tells us that holiness in Christ is the only acceptable lifestyle for heaven. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15–16

John again commends us to purity and holiness as sons and daughters of God: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:1–3

Ellen White, the prophet of the Lord for this last crisis hour, substantiates these scriptures in these words: "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69

"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Matthew 5:48. This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

"The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.

"The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours. The Lord says of those who believe in Him, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' 2 Corinthians 6:16." *The Desire of Ages*, 311

Then only those who are willing to be made willing to obey God's righteous law by the power of the Holy Spirit will be justified and finally sanctified. See Romans 2:13. "Worldly policy and the undeviating principles of righteousness do not blend into each other imperceptibly, like the colors of the rainbow. Between the two a broad, clear line is drawn by the eternal God. The likeness of Christ stands out as distinct from that of Satan as midday in contrast with midnight. And only those who live the life of Christ are His co-workers. If one sin is cherished in the soul, or one wrong practice retained in the life, the whole being is contaminated. The man be-

comes an instrument of unrighteousness." Ibid., 313

True justification can take place only when the sinner is repentant and has truly confessed his sin and is pleading with God for power to keep from all sin. This repentance is not to be repented of. See 2 Corinthians 7:9–10

Only then can sanctification take place as the soul who has been justified by the blood of Christ is held in that relationship by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is true sanctification by the Spirit of God working in the soul.

Ellen White agrees with the scriptures: "But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.

"James writes of Abraham and says, 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only' (James 2:21-24). In order for man to be justified by faith, faith must reach a point where it will control the affections and impulses of the heart; and it is by obedience that faith itself is made perfect." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 366

When a New Theology adherent says one cannot overcome sin, he denies the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy. "He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning has not the faith that will give entrance into the kingdom of God." *Review and Herald*, vol. 5, 24. See also Jude 24

"He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, cannot be overcome." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 349

This promise is our surety, a promise from God to the overcomer. Only those who overcome all hereditary and cultivated weaknesses to sin, will take part in the great supper of the Lamb. See *The Desire of Ages*, 671; *Education*, 258

Remember, one sin took Adam and Eve out of their garden home and one sin unconfessed and unforsaken will keep one from being restored to that garden home. The New Theology is the devil's message to God's remnant church. It is the hellish torch of Satan, that our prophet tells us will come from our pulpits in the final hours of our probation. See *Testimonies to Ministers*, 409–410

The New Theology destroys the need for the cross of Calvary. If the law could not be perfectly kept, then the master counterfeiter, the devil, is true, and God is a liar. And if the devil is true, then Jesus died in vain.

May God now help us to believe the true gospel. There is power to obey perfectly God's holy and righteous law. Only those who are now seeking for this great experience with all their heart and soul will see Jesus. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13 □

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1992 Camp Meetings

These tapes are available for $2 each if purchased as a set, or $2.50 each if ordered separately. Please add 15% for shipping. Washington residents add 7.5% sales tax.

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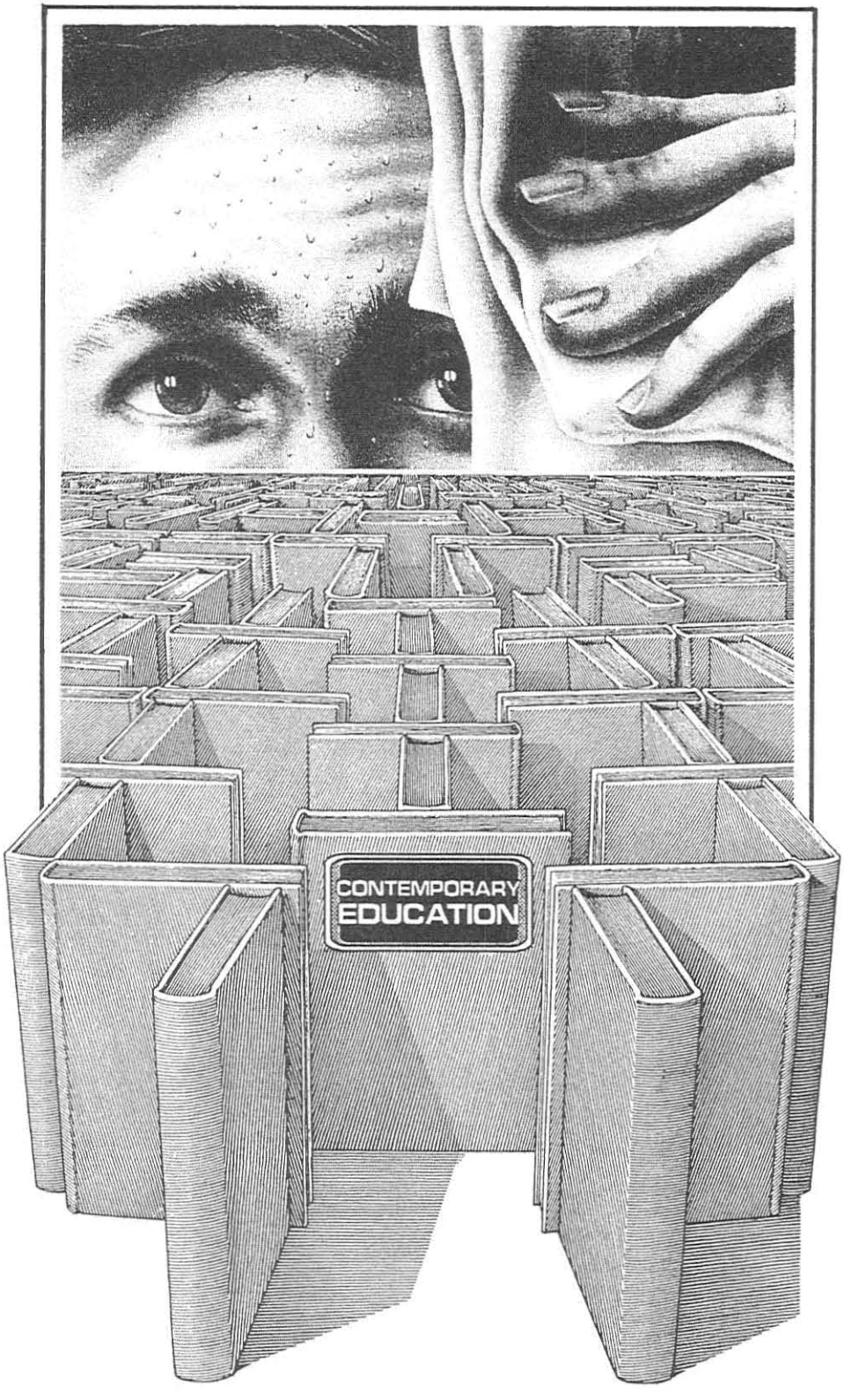
El Pacto Eterno; Las Señales del Fin; La Apostasía Omega

Norberto Restrepo $6
Educando la Familia; Educando con Amor; ¿Dónde Está el Rebaño Que Te Fue Dado?

My Last Will and Testament on the Subject of Education, Part 3



I have spent the major part of my life in educational work. It has been in all phases from the elementary through and including college. I began teaching in the elementary grades. I have been educational secretary of a union and a division conference; and have been principal of three academies and one junior college. I have been head of the Bible Department in two junior colleges and in two senior colleges. I have been dean of two senior colleges and president of one, in which I remained until my health failed and I was obliged to retire.

I now live at a school that my son and his wife with others, who agreed with them in educational ideas, started fourteen years ago. The institution was started, with no financial backing, to try out the principles advocated in the book *Education*. It was a new venture in the field of education in which the vocational and practical have an equal place with the mental and spiritual, and where the dollar basis of finance is ignored. All the buildings on the place have been, and are being, erected by teachers and students, including the plumbing and wiring. Much of the auto and tractor repair work has been done by them.

No money has been paid out on labor for the heating plant or water system. All the dressers and doors for the school and sanitarium have been made on the place by teachers and students. Not only that, but also the desk chairs for the class rooms, and even the operating table for the sanitarium were built by those connected with the institution. I have learned more about the principles of education recommended by the *Testimonies* in these four years since I have been here than in all my training and experience in education before. I had always tried to inject the principles recommended in the *Testimonies* into a formal program operated on a dollar basis. Here I observe that the money basis is ignored and a new system is used which works on the principle of the institution's supplying the necessities of life. It was decided that if the workers were provided a place to live, with heat, light, and food, with free education for the chil-

This article, the third in a four-part series, was written many years ago by Walter E. Straw, now deceased. He was the head of the Theology Department at Emmanuel Missionary College and taught Bible for 14 years. He also served the Church as a Union Educational Secretary and as a missionary in Africa.

Walter E. Straw

dren—the essentials that all must have—not much cash would be required for them to live comfortably. Although there probably could be ways of improving the administration of the place, yet the program has been a success for a small institution like this. And we are told that our schools should be small, "not such elaborate schools as those at Battle Creek and College View." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 139

Feed for the stock is raised on the farms. Wheat is grown, threshed, and ground into flour on the place, and the flour is baked into whole-wheat bread by the students under the supervision of the faculty. Cane is grown and ground into sorghum, supplying much of the sweets needed for the institution. Potatoes, peas, beans, and other produce are raised on the farm and stored for the school year. During the summer, tomatoes, peas, string beans, and other garden produce and fruit are canned and frozen for use during the school year. The students who stay on the place and work during the summer are able to work their entire way through school, with the work they do during the school year. Then, with the major part of the food provided, those who come in the fall for the school year can get through for between $30.00 and $35.00 a month, with the work they do during the school year.

The greatest benefit I see in this program is not so much the fact that students work off their energy in useful employment and have wholesome food, and are able to attend school, even though their parents have little of this world's goods; but it is the ability and versatility I see in those who go through this program of education. They are able to go out and meet successfully so many situations that those who rely on book learning cannot do. A student who finished one of our colleges stayed here and attended the University of Knoxville. While here he told me that one of the boys here knew ten times as much as he, for this boy could turn his hand to most anything, while all he knew was a little biology.

One time I wanted an addition to my house. I showed two of the boys what I wanted and left for my vacation. I was gone about a month. When I returned, the building was finished, including the plumbing and wiring, and was as good a job as I could want. One of those boys spent the first two years in school while here working on the farm, and the last two in construction and repair work. Two doctors, who are operating an institution in the West, spent a few days here not long ago. They were greatly surprised at the small amount of money it takes to operate the institution. On a program where food and the fundamentals are provided on the place, it does not take much cash to operate. I am told that the cash outlay for food beyond what is raised on the place is four cents a meal per person.

Some may think that a work program like this would greatly interfere with the class work. The last figures I have of the results of the examinations sent out from the educational department of the General Conference, which all of the academies of the denomination in this country take, showed that one of the classes here was fourth from the top, and one was at the very top. The rest were equal or above the average.

Many of our people think we need fine buildings and equipment with a big library to impress the world and attract the people to us. I lived for over twenty years at Emmanuel Missionary College where they have stressed construction of elaborate buildings with excellent equipment. I have been at Little Creek about four years where the equipment is poor and buildings are anything but imposing, and I have heard more favorable comments in regard to the work here in these four years than I did at the college in all the years I was there. Last weekend we had some visitors from Illinois who stopped at the place. One was the vice-president of the bank in his city, another was the Methodist minister who spoke at the Sabbath service. At the social gathering in the evening the last night they were here, they expressed themselves as much pleased with the program that gives the youth such opportunities to learn how to dig a living out of the soil, and at the same time, learn the cultural ways of life in the fine arts, so fully demonstrated here in the program that night.

The work of the place attracts people not by its buildings, but by its program. There is a most friendly feeling in the community. Usually when they want help in music, industries, or religious services, they call upon Little Creek. The higher strata have been attracted to the place. When Little Creek was in need of a school building, a lawyer in Knoxville championed the project of raising funds. One of the wealthiest women in Knoxville, a non-Adventist, has been so impressed by the program that she has taken the attitude that she must see it go. She provided most of the tools on the farm, and furnished the money to finish the sanitarium, and now has taken it upon herself to see that there are sufficient funds to finish the new dormitory. The other day the school received a thousand-dollar check from another woman to furnish the new dormitory.

My experience has been that where the program outlined in the *Testimonies* is followed, it gets a favorable response from the non-Adventist community. Many times I have thought what a blessing it would be to our mission work if people like those who started the work at Little Creek could go to central Africa or India, or some other place, and start a work like this. They would dig the building material out of the ground and erect their buildings themselves, and provide their own food from the place, and show the natives how to do the same. What an influence that program would have upon the people, and especially the officials! If that were done, it would relieve the pressure for funds in the homeland, and the great stress the ministers now have in trying to raise funds sufficient to carry on the work, where the material is purchased and men hired at standard wages to erect the buildings, while the natives

My experience has been that where the program outlined in the *Testimonies* is followed, it gets a favorable response from the non-Adventist community

sit by and learn little that they can put to practical use when they return again to their villages. I wonder if that was not what Sister White meant when she urged agriculture and vocational training and said it would make our youth useful in carrying the truth to foreign countries.

Here are the words Sister White gave concerning Madison College and the schools that branched out from there—Little Creek being one of them. "The school at Madison not only educates in a knowledge of the Scriptures, but it gives a practical training that fits the student to go forth as a self-supporting missionary to the field to which he is called. . . . The students have been taught to raise their own crops, to build their own houses, and to care wisely for cattle and poultry. They have been learning to become self-supporting, and a training more important than this they could not receive. Thus they have obtained a valuable education for usefulness in missionary fields. . . . The class of education for usefulness given at the Madison school is such as will be accounted a treasure of great value by those who take up missionary work in foreign fields. If many more in other schools were receiving a similar training, we as a people would be a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. The message would be quickly carried to every country, and souls now in darkness would be brought to the light. . . . In the work being done at the training-school for home and foreign missionary teachers in Madison, Tennessee, and in the small schools established by the teachers who have gone forth from Madison, we have an illustration of one way in which the message should be carried in many, many places." *Pamphlet* No. 119, 1–3

In this pamphlet we are told that if we would follow the method of practical training as was being done at Madison and its units, we would be a spectacle to the world, the angels, and to man and the message would soon be finished in the world. I have already shown how the truthfulness of this has been demonstrated in places where it has been tried. Why not demonstrate the truthfulness of it farther?

To show how true those words were as considered by the world, I quote from a speech by Dr. Harvie Branscomb, chancellor of Vanderbilt University at the golden anniversary of the founding of Madison College. In that speech he said concerning the college, "Most of all, I want to congratulate you upon your educational philosophy. It seems to me there are two or three features of it which stand out and which attracted attention to this institution, as you know better than I, all over the United States. First, your interest is upon the simple fundamental fact that there is no good education that cannot be translated in some form of useful work. Now there again I think you are in line with the best research and the best thinking of psychologists and philosophers of the last one hundred years. They all say that unless in some way the individual can apply what he has learned, can put it into concrete activity, he has not learned it fully. I suspect that your philosophy of study and work means that you get more out of your study than institutions do which do not combine these two qualities.

"Then I think that your principle of educating the whole man, not only his mind, not only his hands, but also his character and soul, is wonderfully sound and fundamental to any view of life. After all, success . . . will never depend solely upon how bright a boy's or girl's mind may be, or even how well educated mentally they may be. . . .

"Finally, I would like to congratulate you upon one other principle in the life of this institution, which has deeply impressed, I think, the whole community, and that is your conviction of the unseen possibilities in even the most unpromising youngsters. We can never know where talent, ability, and future promise lie. . . . All we can do in this world is to do the best we can for every young person to enable him to develop to the fullest of his potentialities." Quoted in the "Madison Survey," October 1954

Recently, I was appointed chairman of a committee to survey the needs of Madison College and decide whether it should follow its original program or modify its plans and work for accreditation. I interviewed the leading officials of the University of Tennessee and also Dr. P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education in the United States under three United States presidents. They all thought that Madison should hold to her original program. I give here a few words from Dr. Claxton in a letter to me dated November 21, 1955. He writes:

"I am much interested in your problem of the future policy of Madison College; whether it shall be continued in the spirit in which, and for the purpose for which, it was established; and which has made it known, approved, and admired in the United States and in much of the outside world; or whether it shall be reorganized and redirected for the purpose of enabling it to get certification as a standard college. . . . I hope the present purpose, method and spirit of the college may be continued. . . . I have said that Madison was the best school in Tennessee. I know many of the colleges of our country and know of none with saner educational purposes and methods than Madison College. We need more like it. In the early years of our country-wide depression, in 1933, when millions of men and women were without employment and when it was reported that less than one-third of the graduates of one of our oldest and greatest universities got employment within a year after graduation, I wrote Dr. Sutherland asking him how many of the graduates of Madison College were not employed. After two months I had an answer—NONE. Then Dr. Bralliar took it up, selecting at random one thousand names, investigated, and wrote me that not one of the thousand was unemployed, that only one had received any pay from the Federal Treasury, and that was for definite work. Madison graduates found employment or made it for themselves."

Dr. Claxton then closes his letter with these words: "The time will come

We are told that if we would follow the method of practical training as was being done at Madison and its units, we would be a spectacle to the world, the angels, and to man and the message would soon be finished in the world

soon, I think, when the present policy of Madison College will not exclude it from recognition as a standard college. The service rendered is more important than present certification. I sincerely hope your committee may decide to continue and enlarge, rather than to change the policy of the past."

This again demonstrates the soundness of the instruction we have received concerning the education needed today. Wherever those principles are tried or brought to the attention of leading educators, or practical businessmen the soundness of them is realized.

It has appeared to me that one of our errors is in trying to interpret the *Testimonies* in harmony with our wishes to give the few a more lucrative income and find a way that would allow them to fit into the educational program of the world and its scheme of industrial, economic, and social affairs. But is that God's plan? It seems to me in view of the following statements from the *Testimonies*, that "We are to make the distinction decidedly apparent" (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, 146) and that "Let us determine that we will not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 255. It appears that God's plan for us is to cut loose from the whole program and allow Him to direct in a humble work in blazing new trails in education, and to get back to the fundamentals of what the average man needs and will use in life. In His plan, God lays down great fundamental principles of life and shows us how to make a happy and successful living, letting the system commend itself to the educational and business world.

I have believed for a long time that if we would follow the program assigned to us by the Lord that the world would have honored us by sanctioning our own program. When I was a member of the Emmanuel Missionary College faculty, I observed the problem many of the students were having in trying to follow that program and urged the president to put in some vocational courses for certain types of students. He was fearful of trying it for fear it would hurt his standing with the accrediting association. I urged him at last to ask Dr. Brumbaugh, the secretary, and see what he said. Finally he worked up courage enough to inquire. The next day he called me into his office, and with a smile on his face, said, "Well, I approached Dr Brumbaugh and timidly asked if he thought it would hurt our standing in the association if we put in some practical courses for those not able to follow the other." He said Dr. Brumbaugh looked at him and said, "Hurt you, why, it would help you. I have wondered for a long time if you were fair to your constituency in following the program you have."

Some years ago when I was dean of Madison College the president of the Southern Accrediting Association and eleven of his associates visited Madison College. I showed them through the sanitarium, and the industries, and told them the influence that program had on the students. They seemed quite interested, and when we stepped into the classroom of business administration, I said: "Gentlemen, the furniture in this room was built on the place in our shop." They looked at each other, and the president said, "What was that you said?" I replied, "All the furniture in this room was built in our shop by teachers and students." The president then said, "Gentlemen, that is what I call education." Those men were greatly impressed by our program and felt that was the kind of education needed for the youth.

Those principles were recognized by the president of the Educational Association in South Africa. They were recognized by the committee appointed by the government of Rhodesia to inspect the missions. They were recognized by the drummer I met in Rhodesia. They were recognized by the government in the Congo, and because of them we were allowed to enter the country. They were recognized by the educational commissioner of East Africa, who said if we would follow them we would lead the world in education. They were recognized by the secretary of the North Central Accrediting Association. They were recognized by the president and his group of the Southern Accrediting Association. Finally, the chancellor of Vanderbilt University confirms it all by saying they are recognized by the best educational thought for the past one-hundred years. Is it not about time that Adventists recognize the great principles God has placed in our hands and put them into practice in our work, so we can be the head and not the tail? It seems to me that if ever the words of Jehoshaphat were applicable they are now. "Believe the Lord your God, so shall you be established; believe his prophets, so shall you prosper." 2 Chronicles 20:20

We as a people have claimed for years that we believe the instruction that has come to us through the *Testimonies* is from God. Whether we actually believe that or not should be judged by what we do rather than by what we say. Words are easy to express, but deeds are what really tell the story. Some fifty years ago we were told that "Our people are now being tested as to whether they will obtain their wisdom from the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, or seek the god of Ekron. Let us determine that we will not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments." Ibid.

I heard one of our leading educators say that he could not understand what that meant. I suppose no one could when he thought we should do as the world does. The only way I can understand it is to believe she meant what she said, and that we should cut loose from following the world. But we say, "How can that be done?" How can our youth be fitted for positions of trust required by the world by this process? That was the reasoning Moses had to deal with in taking the people to the Promised Land. Following God's plan always brings problems, and

Let us determine that we will not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments

sometimes brings people to their knees. Perhaps that would be good for us as a people. It surely would do away with a great deal of pride and contention among us. And I believe it would lessen the stress we now have in providing funds for our worldwide work. It is clear it would cut out some money-making jobs that are now tenaciously clung to in order to be like the world. And all that might greatly help the denomination spiritually, which everyone knows we need.

Sister White said, "God has revealed to me that we are in positive danger of bringing into our educational work the customs and fashions that prevail in the schools of the world. If teachers are not guarded, they will place on the necks of their students worldly yokes instead of the yoke of Christ. The plan of the schools that we shall establish in these closing years of the message is to be of an entirely different order from those we have instituted." Ibid., 532. When those words were spoken, very little was said or done toward accrediting our schools. Then most of our educators were opposed to it. Now all are either in it, or trying to get in. Is that the program she had in mind?

One day I was talking with a man I had worked with in Africa, who is still there. In our conversation he was telling me of some of the problems in the work. One of them was the difficulty that has arisen because their work has been lined up with the government. He said a man from America with his university degree came over and lined them up with the educational program of the government. Since that time the government tells them what to teach, who can teach, and what the pay of the teachers is to be. He said when the commissioner of education came to visit him he told him how foolish that move was because their program did not prepare the natives for the mission program and got the wrong ideas into the natives' heads. Then the commissioner asked, "Why don't you follow the blueprint?" He replied by asking what he meant. The commissioner said that he had read two books written by Mrs. E. G. White. One was called *Education*, and the other one was *Fundamentals of Christian Education.* Then he said, "If you would follow the instruction in those books, you would lead the world in education." Sometimes it takes educators of the world to tell us of the value of the instruction found in what God has given us in the Spirit of Prophecy.

But of course we cannot understand how that instruction can be followed. We can't see how we can get through the Red Sea. We want to go by sight rather than by faith. We look at what the world does—those people who do not know what life is all about, nor what the goal of life is. We turn from the "fountain of living water to broken cisterns that can hold no water." If the blind lead the blind, where do they go? Whether we can see the way or not, if God has given us the *Testimonies* for a guide, the only way they can guide is for us to follow where they lead, whether we can see it or not. □

To be continued

Life Abundant Missionary Institute

40416 123rd Ave. Ct. East • Eatonville, WA 98328 • (206) 832-4491/6602

There are several ways you can learn more about the causes and treatment of disease, how to care for the sick using natural remedies based on the eight laws of health, and other ways to win souls to Christ, including cooking schools and Bible studies. These topics and more are being offered by the staff of Life Abundant Missionary Institute.

Field Seminars

You may invite our staff to present a seminar in your area. These seminars present God's call for each member of His church to be a medical missionary. Classes are given in simple remedies and healthful cooking.

Ministry of Healing Seminars

The seven-day seminars held at the new facilities of Life Abundant Missionary Institute offer instruction in the following areas: *The Ministry of Healing*, hydrotherapy, the use of charcoal, nutrition, controverted health issues, and how to give Bible studies. The total tuition for these courses is $180, including handouts, food, and lodging. The next two on-campus seminars are scheduled for **March 24–30** and **April 14–20**.

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Our four-month gospel medical missionary program, scheduled for **May 3–August 31, 1993**, offers a brief, yet comprehensive, training in Bible work and health ministry. This course includes the topics covered by the Ministry of Healing seminars in greater depth, along with a class entitled The Creator's Masterpiece (human anatomy and physiology). Please call or write for enrollment prices and information.

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The following courses are now available for study:

- The Creator's Masterpiece
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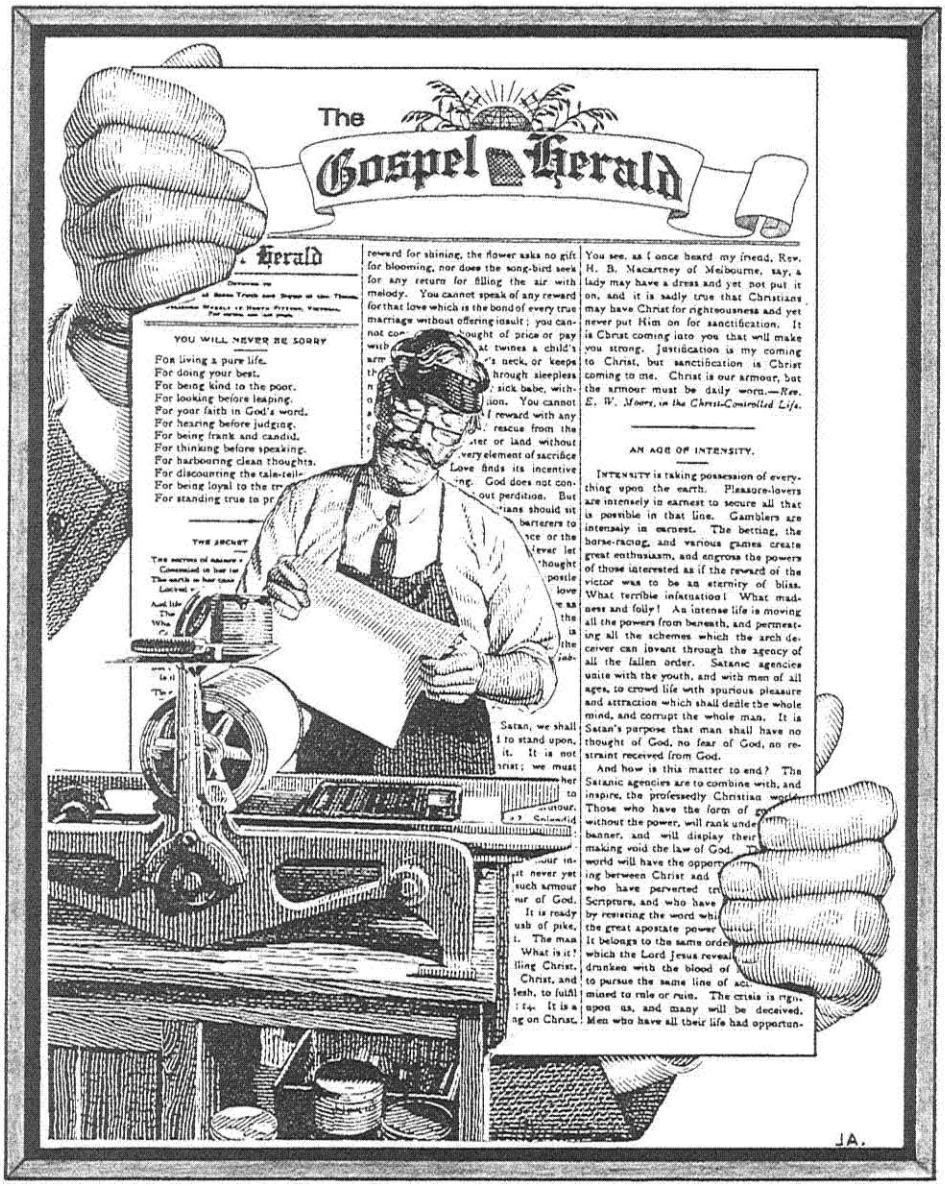
- How to Give Bible Studies

Write for information:

If you would like more information regarding any of these services, please write or call us at the address shown above.

Pre-registration is required for the courses at Life Abundant Missionary Institute.


The Gospel Herald
YOU WILL NEVER BE SORRY
For living a pure life.
For doing your best.
For being kind to the poor.
For looking before leaping.
For your faith in God's word.
For hearing before judging.
For being frank and candid.
For thinking before speaking.
For harbouring clean thoughts.
For discounting the tale-teller.
For being loyal to the tr
For standing true to pr
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reward for shining, the flower asks no gift
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for any return for filling the air with
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g on Christ.
You see, as I once heard my friend, Rev.
H. B. Macartney of Melbourne, say, a
lady may have a dress and yet not put it
on, and it is sadly true that Christians
may have Christ for righteousness and yet
never put Him on for sanctification. It
is Christ coming into you that will make
you strong. Justification is my coming
to Christ, but sanctification is Christ
coming to me. Christ is our armour, but
the armour must be daily worn.—Rev.
E. W. Moore, in the Christ-Controlled Life.
AN AGE OF INTENSITY.
INTENSITY is taking possession of every-
thing upon the earth. Pleasure-lovers
are intensely in earnest to secure all that
is possible in that line. Gamblers are
intensely in earnest. The betting, the
horse-racing, and various games create
great enthusiasm, and engross the powers
of those interested as if the reward of the
victor was to be an eternity of bliss.
What terrible infatuation! What mad-
ness and folly! An intense life is moving
all the powers from beneath, and permeat-
ing all the schemes which the arch de-
ceiver can invent through the agency of
all the fallen order. Satanic agencies
unite with the youth, and with men of all
ages, to crowd life with spurious pleasure
and attraction which shall dedile the whole
mind, and corrupt the whole man. It is
Satan's purpose that man shall have no
thought of God, no fear of God, no re-
straint received from God.
And how is this matter to end? The
Satanic agencies are to combine with, and
inspire, the professedly Christian world.
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Supportive Ministries, Part 2

Vernon Sparks

IN our articles thus far we have reviewed how God has called, organized, and empowered the Seventh-day Adventist denomination to be His end-time, visible church. We have discussed to some extent how we as a people have tended to look to man for guidance rather than to Christ, the Head of the Church. We have seen how our lack of faith in His counsels has resulted in insubordination to Christ's leadership. Our still being here on earth is mute testimony of our unrighteousness through lack of faith.

We have looked at our history to see how God began using His reserve plan to utilize supportive ministries when His work is neglected and His counsels ignored and disobeyed. We have touched on how our diminished spiritual perceptions have allowed, within the last forty years, new doctrines to come in among us, causing confusion and divisions.

We have seen how the watchmen have failed to give adequate warning to protect the church from false teachers and members. What is God's plan for this on-going frequent failure to give the warning trumpet a clear, certain sound?

We have discussed in Part 4 of this series (see *Our Firm Foundation*, vol. 7, No. 12), how in the 1950s, teachings of Calvinism began coming into the very heart of our organization. Articles espousing these beliefs have appeared quite regularly in our major magazines. Books teaching strange-to-Adventist doctrines are prominent issues of our principal publishing houses. We are printing, preaching, promoting and proselytizing with opposing and contradictory beliefs and doctrines being promoted side by side.

Within our ranks are opposite doctrines of what is sin—sin by birth or sin by choice. These doctrines lead to opposing beliefs regarding the human nature of Christ—the nature of Adam before the Fall versus the nature of Adam after the Fall. The resulting dual concepts of what Christ is to us—our substitute and partial example only, versus our substitute and complete example, are related to a difference in understanding of our relationship to sin in this life—continued sinning until Christ comes, versus victory over every sin in this life through the constant indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

Part of our dichotomy of doctrines is that righteousness by faith is said to be justification only, rather than both justification and sanctification. This concept leads to the opposing beliefs that the atonement was finished at the cross, versus its presently being completed in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary above. Today there are two differing major versions of the gospel that are believed and taught among us. See the references noted in Part 4 of this series for discussion of these issues. Confusion, distrust and division are compounded by our official magazine stating that our understanding of the gospel is not unique and concluding that therefore we do not have the task of carrying a unique gospel to the world, for other denominations are doing and will do their part. See *Adventist Review*; January 2, 1992, 9–10

The confusion caused by leadership attempting to accommodate a pluralism of beliefs within the Seventh-day Adventist Church was recently reflected in the "Faith Alive" page of the *Adventist Review* of December 31, 1992. The author, a general vice-president of the General Conference, was explaining the difficulty encountered by the *Church Manual* Committee in getting adopted a *Church Manual* statement that Seventh-day Adventist ministers "should not perform the marriage ceremony of believers with unbelievers." The author rightly referred his readers to Amos 3:3; 2 Corinthians 6:14; *Testimonies,* vol. 4, 503–508, and *Messages to Young People*, 439–442, for the inspired

authority for such a stand. The General Conference session of July 1990 and the Annual Council of October 1992 both referred the proposal back for further study because, for one reason "some ministers" believe that they need "more flexibility" than the clear "thus saith the Lord" statements provide. It is tragic that those who have lost their faith in the law and the Testimonies have gained such prominence within our leadership that they can mute the certain sound of the trumpet of those trying to keep the faith alive in our historic beliefs.

Such a situation is detrimental to our spiritual health and to our ability to fulfill the gospel commission. For what will it profit us and others if we believe and preach the wrong gospel? For what will it profit a man (or a church) if he carries a gospel to the whole world, but he loses his own soul because it was the wrong gospel? Our eternal destiny and those to whom we minister, will be determined by whether we believe, experience and share the true gospel or the false. The eternal welfare of the flock of Christ is endangered by the present doctrinal pluralism and confusion among us as a people.

"It makes every difference with the future eternal well-being of men whether they follow God's way or their own way. Their way may be entirely wrong. Are there many paths to heaven? If so, man may take any path that suits his fancy. But there is only one true way." *Review and Herald*, vol. 3, 447

Such a condition and such a danger require and demand more than a fence-straddling neutrality in-time-of-crisis approach by the undershepherds, spiritual leaders of God's people. Christ desires and commands that there be a voice or voices that will speak for Him and say what He says about sin.

" 'Reprove, rebuke, exhort,' the Lord says, 'with all long-suffering and doctrine.' 2 Timothy 4:2. Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil." *The Desire of Ages*, 805–806

There is to be no doctrinal confusion in Christ's remnant church. There is to be no poisonous plants in the pasture for His flock.

The long-term persistent disobedience to Christ's instructions of how to operate the various branches of His work is also required by Him to be pointed out for what it is—insubordination.

"God calls for men of decided fidelity. He has no use in an emergency for two-sided men. He wants men who will lay their hand upon a wrong work and say, 'This is not according to the will of God.' " *Selected Messages*, book 2, 153

Saying what Christ says in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy about any and every matter is the straight testimony. In these final hours Christ is urgently calling for a straight testimony to awaken us from spiritual blindness and poverty.

"The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for a renewal of spiritual life." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 297

"The straight testimony must live in Monterey, even if it cuts off the right arm and plucks out the right eye. God calls for straight and thorough work. He is purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, 333

"Wrongs must be called wrongs. Grievous sins must be called by their right name. . . . The plain, straight testimony must live in the church, or the curse of God will rest upon His people as surely as it did upon ancient Israel because of their sins." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 676

God's global mission plan calls for the inreach work of purifying the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well as the outreach work of warning the world.

"Shake off your spiritual lethargy. Work with all your might to save your own souls and the souls of others. It is no time now to cry 'Peace and safety.' It is not silver-tongued orators that are needed to give this message. The truth in all its pointed severity must be spoken. Men of action are needed—men who will labor with earnest, ceaseless energy for the purifying of the church and the warning of the world. . . .

"Men whose faith is weak and wavering are not the ones to carry forward the work at this important crisis. We need the courage of heroes and the faith of martyrs." Ibid., 187

We become responsible for those evils for which we do not labor to purify from the camp. "Those who have too little courage to reprove wrong, or who through indolence or lack of interest make no earnest effort to purify the family or the church of God, are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty. We are just as responsible for evils that we might have checked in others by exercise of parental or pastoral authority as if the acts had been our own." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 578

Men of action are needed—men who will labor with earnest, ceaseless energy for the purifying of the church and the warning of the world

God's plan for church organization and authority places the responsibility for reproving sin, and for exposing false doctrines and their proponents, primarily upon the organizational leadership of His people. When His denominated leadership fails to perform their work, once again as when the branches of His work are not operated according to His will, with great reluctance He turns to men of His own calling. Once again He turns to men and ministries that will be supportive of His will and ways.

"The work ought to have moved forward with a hundredfold more power than it has. Believers have themselves barred the way against its advancement by their lack of faith. They have limited the Lord God of heaven. Where there is now one at work, there should be hundreds, and there would be if men would trust God and obey His Word.

"If all had been doers of the Word, a great work would have been done for the

Master, zealously, faithfully, untiringly. Light has been given me that if the Lord's people do not strive more earnestly to make the truth of the Word of God more widely known, the Lord will raise up other instruments, who, in the spirit of John the Baptist, will do His work. Darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. But the Holy Spirit can speak and will speak to the hearts and minds of men. Those God chooses are taught of Him." *Manuscript Releases,* vol. 18, 144

Accepting the commission and the call of the Lord to do and to say what He has said, these are His supportive ministries

Thus, over the last decade, there has been a veritable mushrooming of unassociated, self-supporting ministries with a new emphasis. Previous self-supporting ministries had arisen primarily with a burden for following the Lord's counsels in some branch of His work. They were a reflection of the denomination's failure to carry out those instructions. Many of the more recent self-supporting ministries have a primary burden for the preaching and publishing of the historic Adventist beliefs. They are a reflection of the more recent confusion of the organization in regard to those beliefs.

Thus we are saddened, but not surprised, to find today that the academies, the colleges, the vegetarian restaurants, the health-conditioning centers, and now also the preaching and the publishing that are most faithfully following the Lord's counsels, are to be found among the self-supporting ministries. Accepting the commission and the call of the Lord to do and to say what He has said, these are His supportive ministries. Contingent with their call and commission are their authority and duty to accept the Lord's means that the Holy Spirit impresses God's people to send them for the carrying out of their work.

Such a system of inreach and outreach by dedicated and loyal believers of the Seventh-day Adventist faith is not a part of God's original plan for church organization, but neither is it a new organization or movement separating from Christ's denominated visible church on earth. Those self-supporting ministries that are doing and saying what Christ has said are the true supportive ministries of Christ and also of His remnant visible Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The more recent ministries that have arisen with the burden to preach and publish the historic Adventist beliefs and to say, "This is not according to the will of God," are Christ's reserve plan necessitated by the delinquency of denominated leadership to give the message of Isaiah 58:1: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."

The Case of A. T. Jones

Around the turn of the century there was a strong movement in the United States for the passage of a national Sunday law. The Lord had given A. T. Jones special messages regarding this subject, as well as on the subject of righteousness by faith. When he encountered difficulty obtaining permission to speak in our own churches to awaken our own people on these issues, Ellen White came to his rescue. She informed leadership that if permission was not given to speak in our churches, then an independent renting of public halls and a sending out of handbills would be undertaken in order to reach and to arouse our own people.

"A false religion has come in among us, a legal religion. We will not keep silent. The church must be roused. We will secure halls in the cities and put out handbills and the people shall be enlightened. God has sent a message of warning. We must soon wrestle with the powers of the land, and we have every reason to fear that falsehood will gain the mastery. We shall call upon our churches in the name of the Lord to view this struggle in its true light. It is a contest between the Christianity of the Old and New Testaments and the Christianity of human tradition and corrupt fables.

"This contest is to decide whether the pure gospel shall have the field in our nation, or whether the popery of past ages shall receive the right hand of fellowship. . . .

"Shall we let things drift, and let Satan have the victory without a protest? God forbid. . . .

"Stand out of the way, Brethren. Do not interpose yourselves between God and His work. If you have no burden of the message yourselves, then prepare the way for those who have the burden of the message. . . .

"The watchmen must sound the alarm. If men are at ease in Zion somebody must be awake to give the trumpet a certain sound. Let the blaze of the beacon light be seen everywhere. Let the ease-loving awake, the tranquil be disturbed. . . .

"And Satan is doing his utmost to have those who believe present truth deceived on this point, for he has laid his snare to overcome them, that those who have accepted unpopular truth, who have had great light and great privileges, shall have the spirit that will pervade the world. Even if it is in a less degree, yet it is the same principle that when it has a controlling power over minds, leads to certain results. There is pride of opinion, a stubbornness that shuts the soul away from good and from God. Warnings have been scorned, grace resisted, privileges abused, conviction smothered, and the pride of the human heart strengthened. The result is the same as with the Jews—fatal hardness of heart. It is not safe for the soul to rise up against the messages of God." *Manuscript Releases,* vol. 16, 236–241

In spite of the spirit of pluralism in our church today, many believers in historic Adventist beliefs are finding access to our pulpits and presses blocked and they are thus having to resort to methods of reaching God's people which Ellen White threatened to use nearly one hundred years ago.

We are on the very edge of eternity. It is too late to be preaching and doing that which appeals to the human heart.

"The minister of God is commanded: 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' The Lord says of these people: 'They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness.' Isaiah 58:1–2. Here is a people who are self-deceived, self-righteous, self-complacent; and the minister is commanded to cry aloud and show them their transgressions. In all ages this work has been done for God's people, and it is needed now more than ever before." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 299

Because the organized ministry are frequently not giving the message for this hour, we have undoubtedly come to the time that the servant of the Lord has said that each one is to cry aloud and spare not.

"I shall no longer hold my peace. I am bidden to cry aloud, and spare not. I have tried in every way to bring about the needed reformation, and save the souls of those who are following a wrong course. But I cannot go on as I have been going. When every effort has been made to save their souls, and yet all is in vain, we must cry aloud and spare not, lest our silence be interpreted to mean consent. The time has come when each one must stand in his lot and place, prepared to call sin, sin, and righteousness, righteousness." *Loma Linda Messages*, 48

The purpose of the crying aloud is the same as the message to Laodicea. Its purpose is to awaken us to our spiritual blindness and to our disobedience of the Lord. Its motive is not to wound, but to heal. Its purpose is to lead us to repentance, to revival and to reformation. The purpose of the rebuking and chastening is not to discourage us but to help restore us.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Revelation 3:18–19

But in our Laodicean blindness we tend to perceive such crying aloud with the straight testimony as critical, divisive and non-supportive. We claim immunity from the message "because Matthew 18 was not followed," not acknowledging that Christ's plan for correcting wrongs affecting the church is that of "cry aloud, spare not." See "How to Correct Wrongs," *Our Firm Foundation*, Vol.7, No. 9

"The truth is the truth. It is not to be wrapped up in beautiful adornings, that the outside appearance may be admired. The teacher is to make the truth clear and forcible to the understanding and to the conscience. The word is a two-edged sword, that cuts both ways. It does not tread as with soft, slippered feet." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1147

Laodicea claims immunity from the straight testimony given by "independent" men, ministers and ministries because they are not "chosen" or approved by the organized, visible church, thus denying that God uses men of His own choosing.

"The Lord does not ask permission of those in responsible positions when He wishes to use certain ones as His agents for the promulgation of truth. But He will use whom He will use. He will pass by men who have not followed His counsel, men who feel capable and sufficient to work in their own wisdom; and He will use others who are thought by these supposedly wise ones to be wholly incompetent." *Review and Herald*, vol. 3, 275

"Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 107

We claim immunity from the straight testimony because "times have changed" and "circumstances are different since the Lord gave those counsels to Ellen White."

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

"We know that in the past the truth has been demonstrated by the Holy Spirit. Not one word of human devising is to be permitted to subvert minds or to add unto or to take from the message that God has given." *The Paulson Collection*, 200

"During the night we were in a council meeting, trying to decide what we were going to do. One of authority stood up and said, 'Everything that has been given to ministers, to men in responsible positions, to teachers, to managers, to the different conferences, is to be repeated and repeated, because Satan is now doing a special work to make of no effect the testimonies that come from God. We must work earnestly to bring this instruction before the people.' " *Battle Creek Letters*, 3

"Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 41

"Let no one flatter himself that a part of God's requirements are nonessential. He has placed no command in His Word that men may obey or disobey at will, and not suffer the consequences. If men choose any other path than that of strict obedience, they will find that 'the end thereof are the ways of death.' " *Signs of the Times*, vol. 1, 447

We claim immunity from the straight testimony because it is "too strong," "too straight." It discourages the new converts who need "milk rather than meat." "We have to be patient with people." "It takes time to change."

"If those who have been in the church for weeks and months have not

Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time

learned the straightness of the way, and what it is to be Christians, and cannot hear all the straight truths of the Word of God, it were better that they were cut off from Israel. It is too late in the day to feed with milk. If souls a month or two old in the truth, who are about to enter the time of trouble such as never was, cannot hear all the straight truth, or endure the strong meat of the straightness of the way, how will they stand in the day of battle? Truths that we have been years learning must be learned in a few months by those who now embrace the third angel's message. . . . There is no need of milk after souls are convinced of the truth. As soon as the conviction of truth is yielded to and the heart willing the truth should have its effect, the truth will work like leaven, and purify and purge away the passions of the natural heart. It is a disgrace for those who have been in the truth for years to talk of feeding souls who have been months in the truth, upon milk. It shows they know little of the leadings of the Spirit of the Lord, and realize not the time we are living in. Those who embrace the truth now will have to step fast. There will have to be a breaking up of heart before the Lord, a rending of heart, and not the garment." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 33–34

We claim immunity from the straight testimony because God is "blessing our efforts" in spite of neglecting those counsels; therefore "they must not be important to God."

"If all of those who come together for meetings of edification and prayer could be regarded as true worshipers, then might we hope, though much would still remain to be done for us. But it is in vain to deceive ourselves. Things are far from being what the appearance would indicate. From a distant view much may appear beautiful which, upon close examination, will be found full of deformities. The prevailing spirit of our time is that of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of pretended illumination because of a knowledge of the truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. There is a spirit of opposition to the plain Word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit. There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 79

"The church at Battle Creek might have stood free from idolatry, and her faithfulness would have been an example to other churches. But she is more willing to depart from God's commandments than to renounce the friendship of the world. She is joined to the idols which she has chosen; and because temporal prosperity and the favor of a wicked world are hers, she believes herself to be rich toward God. This will prove to many a fatal delusion. Her divine character and spiritual strength have departed from her." Ibid., 190

Too often we tend to dismiss or devalue the importance of many self-supporting ministries and thus the importance of following the Lord's counsels by looking at outward appearances. Many times their apparent success seems no greater than, or as great as, the work of those not following the Lord's counsels. We must remember that God "looketh on the heart." Also, self-supporting ministries cannot fully do the work that a larger organization could have done if it had followed all of the Lord's counsels. The apparent success or failure of a self-supporting ministry cannot be used to measure the results if the organization had followed Christ's directions.

Man cannot possibly stretch over that gulf that has been made by the workers who have not been following the divine Leader. We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years

The following words to P.T. Magan as efforts were being made to obey the Lord's counsels in regard to Battle Creek College are still applicable today:

"How can finite man carry the burdens of responsibility for this time? His people have been far behind. Human agencies under the divine planning may recover something of what is lost because the people who had great light did not have corresponding piety, sanctification, and zeal in working out God's specified plans. They have lost to their own disadvantage what they might have gained to the advancement of the truth if they had carried out the plans and will of God. Man cannot possibly stretch over that gulf that has been made by the workers who have not been following the divine Leader. We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel, but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action." *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 202

The church must measure itself and the importance of following the Lord's leadership rather than the wisdom of the world, not by the opinions of men, but by what would have been if she had continued on to follow the Lord.

"The church cannot measure herself by the world, not by the opinions of men, nor yet by what she once was. Her position in this world is to be compared with what it would have been had she continually pressed onward and upward, from victory to victory." Ibid., 193

Yes, God resorts to His reserve plan of church organization when His preferred plan fails to carry out His will. He raises up men and ministries to do and say what He would do and say were He on earth. When the regular work fails to do a certain work, Christ turns to those who will be supportive of His plans. If and when the organized work takes up a neglected task and carries it forward in full harmony with Christ's directive, it would then seem appropriate for the supportive ministry to consider being absorbed into the regular work. When the church turns back fully to following Christ her Leader, then the supportive ministries will no longer need to exist independent of the church organization. May God hasten that day should be our prayer and our goal.

Until that day arrives what other plans does God have relating to His Laodicean church? Our next article will address the topic of what should be our personal responses to delinquent church organization and authority. □

True Religion

What is true religion? It is to love God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves. This is the whole duty of man. To reach this high standard of character should be the absorbing purpose of every soul. How shall I love God with all my heart? What means are provided for fixing my affections on high and heavenly things? Love to God must be cultivated daily, by calling to mind the great love that God has manifested toward us in giving us His well-beloved Son.

We should try to comprehend the wonders of this amazing sacrifice. We should dwell on the marvelous love of our Redeemer till our stony hearts are melted in contrition and gratitude. The love that stirred His bosom enabled Him, the spotless Lamb of God, to become an offering for the guilty transgressor of His Father's law. It sustained Him in His purpose to save the fallen race, amid their heartless ingratitude and scorn. It strengthened Him for temptation, reproach, torture, poverty, shame, and death. Oh, the unfathomable depths of redeeming love! who can sound this mighty deep?

When we make redemption the subject of our meditation, and try to comprehend the vastness of the plan of salvation, and to realize the unutterable love of Him who has died for us, our hearts will be subdued and softened, and we shall yield them wholly to our Saviour. We shall fall at His feet in adoration, exclaiming, "My Lord and my God!" A more than human love is wakened in the soul, through the knowledge of the wonderful love of Christ to one who has rebelled against His rule and grieved Him by transgression. The sinner who has felt the power of Christ's cleansing blood, has a deep and abiding sense that he owes his all to that Saviour who has purchased him with His own precious life. All who have this consciousness and appreciation of the love of Christ, will esteem it the highest privilege of their lives to devote every power of their being to His service. The transforming grace of Christ moulds the desires of the heart, and there is a ready willingness to make any sacrifice for the truth's sake.

Those who love their Redeemer will rejoice at every opportunity to share with Him in humiliation, shame, and reproach. The love they bear their Lord makes suffering, for His sake, sweet; and they know that if they suffer with Him they shall also reign with Him in His glory. This experience of suffering for Christ's sake is absolutely essential to the spiritual life of the Christian. There can be no true, vital godliness without seasons of trial and grief. We are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and the trial of our faith is more precious than gold.

Many claim to love God while they fail to cherish love toward their brethren; but genuine love to God will testify to its real existence by love to our fellow men. Those who love God will reveal the tender, compassionate spirit of Jesus to all that are around them. They will love their brethren, because they are the members of the body of Christ. They will love the sinner, because he is the purchase of the blood of Christ; and this love, abiding in the heart, will display itself by earnest labor to benefit and bless all with whom they associate. They will yearn for the salvation of men, and will lead others to the fountain that has refreshed their own souls.

The love of Christ will not make us less fit for actual life, but will enable us to adapt ourselves to the wants of others, and will develop highly practical fruit in our daily experience. It is not a weak sentimentalism. It is not of that cheap order that is earthly and sensual, leading to debasement of the soul and defilement of the character. It is not of earthly, but of heavenly origin. This love is elevating in its nature, enduring and ennobling, shedding rays of beneficence upon all within

Ellen G. White

the circle of its influence. God, through His Son, has sent down this heavenly love to unite us with Himself. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4:11. Let us ponder this divine love, that we may become changed, and may reflect this precious attribute of the character of our Redeemer. We shall be in less peril of placing our affections on unworthy objects.

The disciple John became a possessor of this divine love. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. He came under the power of the love of Christ, and the knowledge of this love awakened a depth of affection that, by its infusion through his heart, wrought a transformation of character. The warm affection of John was not the cause of Christ's love for him. The Saviour had loved him before this affection had an existence; but the unmerited kindness of his Lord had kindled love in the breast of the disciple.

John's natural character was marked with imperfections. He was impetuous, and resentful under injuries. When the Samaritans refused to entertain his Lord because they thought He favored the Jews more than He did them, John wanted the insult to receive immediate retribution. His spirit was stirred with revenge, and he said to his Master, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" Jesus looked upon John, and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:54–56

Revengeful thoughts and words are contrary to the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus. It is not always easy to bring our feelings under control. The human heart needs to be guarded continually, that we may not cherish a spirit unlike that of our divine Lord. It will be impossible for us to bear insult and harshness with loving forbearance and patience unless we drink of the spirit of Him "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." 1 Peter 2:23. It is natural for us to think when we are falsely accused that we must retaliate and show our contempt of the traducers, but this is foreign to the meekness of our Redeemer. We must not allow one revengeful thought to arise. Sorrow and indignation may fill our hearts for a season, because souls are deceived and misled by these falsehoods; but it will not help matters to cherish unholy anger, and it will not be cherished where the forgiving love of Christ has imbued the soul.

The prevalent opinion that John was naturally of a meek and yielding character is proved, by a study of his life, to be erroneous. He had high ambitions to be first in the kingdom of Christ. He had decidedly rebuked one who was casting out devils in the name of Jesus, because he was not in their company. He had strong traits of character, not weak and vacillating, but self-assertive and ambitious for honor. Jesus taught the needed lessons of humility and patience. He manifested in contrast to John's violent spirit, calm consideration and forbearance. John was a learner in the school of Christ. As the character of the divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and the patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and the meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love; but he was not simply an admirer; he showed his appreciation by imitating the divine characteristics of his Lord. His revengeful, ambitious temper he yielded to the moulding power of the Spirit of Christ. He set his soul to copy the lovely Pattern and become like Him who is meek and lowly of heart.

This is the sure result of association with Jesus. As we meditate upon His character our hearts are drawn out in love, desire awakens to become like Him whom we love, and, by beholding, we become changed. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Everything that defileth is banished from the soul's temple. Lust, base passions, impure thoughts, pride, inordinate affections, revenge, retaliation, covetousness, envy, all these are prohibited; and what we once loved, now we hate; for we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Christ's Spirit, Christ's love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and Heaven.

The truth we claim to believe should make us better men and women in our home life, in our church relations, in our business, and in our intercourse with our friends and neighbors. Unless this result is manifested, we should examine ourselves to see what is hindering the sanctifying influence of the truth from accomplishing its work of purification in our lives. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Our characters must be moulded after the divine model, that we may have an elevating influence on all with whom we associate. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:9

Had Peter practiced the lessons that Christ presented during His ministry, he would never have apostatized and denied his Lord; but we thank God that, although in his weakness he did forsake his Master, he thoroughly repented and was forgiven. The lessons which he had failed to take to heart were learned and made practical in his life, and at last he who had deserted his Lord counted it too great an honor that he was permitted to suffer shame and death for His sake.

How different it was with Judas! He had been in the society of the great Teacher. The same privileges were granted to him as were bestowed on Peter and John; but how did he respond to the light? Like many of this day, he professed to be a follower of Christ, but failed to identify his interests with the cause of his Lord. He listened to the lessons of Christ, but they made no change in his character. He did not seek to rid himself of his selfish penuriousness by sacrificing for the advancement of the cause he claimed to espouse. He cultivated a spirit of greed, till the desirableness of Christ and heaven was eclipsed. This plague-spot in his soul spread, like a destroying leprosy, till the whole man was corrupted. Noble liberty was left to wither. Every unselfish purpose was darkened, until the hope of

We must arm ourselves with the Spirit of Christ, stand in defense of the truth, and yet do this whole work of honoring God and resisting evil without having a spirit of retaliation arise in our hearts

obtaining a few paltry dollars led him to betray his Saviour.

How many are repeating these mistakes, because they do not profit by the example of those who have followed this course in the past! They are not doers of the words of Christ. They do not conform their lives to His divine instruction. Those who have the greatest deformities of character, may have the greatest grace. The highest seat will be awarded to those who, through appropriating the promises of God to themselves, attain the greatest likeness to Christ.

A longing, hungering desire takes possession of the soul that is conforming to the divine standard. Oh, to be filled with the knowledge of the will of God! Oh, that heavenly light may illumine the pathway! Oh, for deeper draughts of the well of salvation! This is the constant cry of the heart to God, and the promise is that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

It is the love of Jesus in the soul that enables the Christian to count all things as loss, to endure toil, to rejoice in sacrifice, and to suffer reproach for the truth. Love for Jesus is the motive power of the lifework, and the sustaining strength for every duty.

While the love of God makes its possessor meek and lowly of spirit, and eradicates all hatred and revenge, and all that is unholy, it will not leave the Christian without power to oppose wrong and rebuke sin. If dangerous errors threaten the faith, through the efforts of deceived church members or false shepherds, they will be met and opposed with decision. The soldiers of Christ must be like sentinels on guard, watching on the walls of Zion. They must defend the faith once delivered to the saints, and press back the powers of moral darkness with determined energy and will.

The disciple John, while he has written many chapters on the subject of love, speaks very decidedly to his brethren on the duty of rebuking error. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," (2 John 9) is his decision; and he instructs them not to receive such a one into their houses or bid him Godspeed.

We must arm ourselves with the Spirit of Christ, stand in defense of the truth, and yet do this whole work of honoring God and resisting evil without having a spirit of retaliation arise in our hearts. Every warning in the Word of God is to be heeded, every instruction followed, that we may keep our souls in the love of God. We must oppose error for Christ's sake and for the sake of the purchase of His blood, that God may be honored, His ways vindicated, and souls saved from the fast-hastening ruin that is to overwhelm the world. Christ is our example in all things. We must consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be weary and faint in our minds. We must go forward, exemplifying in our lives the principles of true religion, that we may be living epistles "known and read of all men"; (2 Corinthians 3:2) that we may love God with all our heart, and our neighbors as ourselves. □

The Signs of the Times, vol. 2, 178–179 (January 13, 1888)

The Maginot Line

Continued from 7

18:11). Unfortunately, certain advocates of what has come to be known as the New Theology have used this verse to sustain their contention that those who believe salvation is accomplished by divine-human co-operation are therefore guilty of legalism. But in claiming this, these advocates of the New Theology miss the point entirely. Simply because a person claims to be experiencing divine power does not mean he in fact is doing so. No heart polluted by pride or cherished sin of any kind can ever experience, apart from conversion, God's transforming grace. Such may appear outwardly righteous, but within they are full of dead men's bones (Matthew 23:27). It is utterly impossible for a legalist ever to perfectly obey God's law. It is true that Paul speaks of how, before his conversion, he was blameless according to the law (Philippians 3:6). But this assertion was according to the superficial, selective standard of pharisaical righteousness. Paul, or Saul, was not even keeping the letter of the law while a Pharisee, since his persecution of Christians caused him repeatedly to break the sixth commandment. Elsewhere he writes that during this same period of his life he was guilty of all kinds of covetousness (Romans 7:8). The other nine commandments deal with outward behavior, which many legalists can become reasonably good at maintaining. But the tenth deals with the heart, where the real problem lies.

What, then, is the bottom line of legalism? Like every other false religion, it is superficial and selective holiness. The same human heart which naturally inclines toward evil also naturally inclines toward religion. Many Christians seem preoccupied with reaching the so-called "secular mind," but the Bible itself spends little more time with it than to call one who denies God's existence a fool (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). Most people want a certain degree of religion in their lives, even if only at Christmas, Easter, weddings and funerals. The trouble is, they want their darling sins as well. And the outcome of every false religion is the construction of a mask under which those sins persist. The only difference between legalism and its opposite extreme is the type of mask one chooses to wear. □

To be continued.

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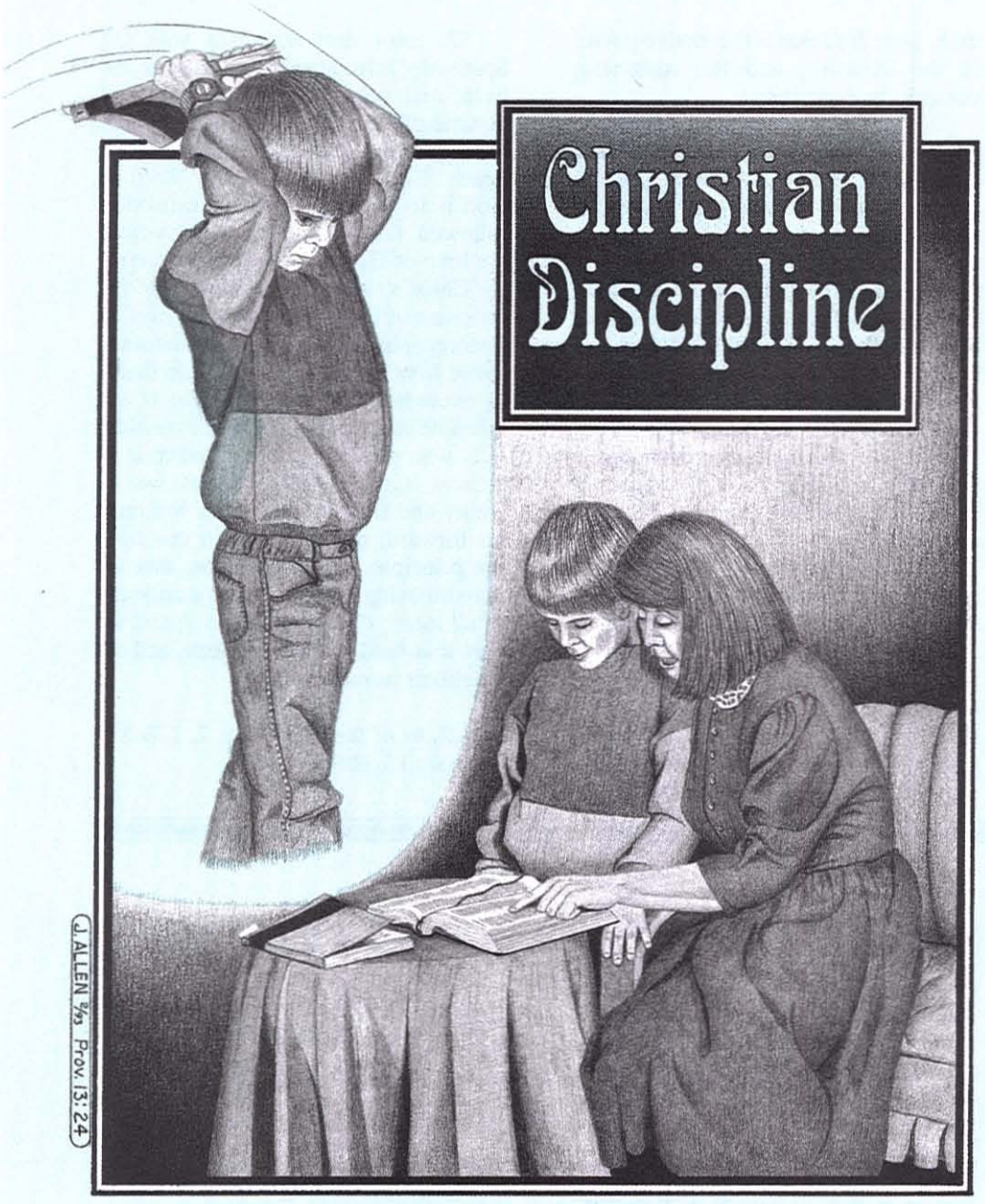
Christian Discipline



TO begin, we must realize that all who are not vitally connected to Christ come to disciplining (correcting wrong behavior, thoughts, desires or feelings) from an unbalanced perspective. We as parents are either unbalanced, to a greater or lesser degree, in being too severe, cold, harsh, and dictatorial without compassion; or we come from an equally wrong and harmful perspective, that of being so kind and gentle that we lack decision and firmness.

The too-kind mothers, as I have the tendency to be, have a love called sentimentalism. This kind of love lets the child have his selfish, disobedient way; the mother excuses his wrong behavior, coaxes, and reasons at great lengths with the child, hoping against hope that he will choose to obey. She sees she cannot change his heart or will. Since she has no control, this mother fears to cross the child's will because of the resulting upheaval. She lets the child express selfish words, play with things he should not play with, or behave loudly and distractingly without correction; then she often excuses his behavior. This false love creates weak, boisterous, undesirable children and is the worst evil she can do to them.

We must realize that both sides are unbalanced; they are without Christ at every step, and the result is children that are not pleasing to parents, friends, society and most important, are not pleasing or acceptable to God. In this state they are unfit for heaven.

On the other hand, the too severe and dictatorial parent has a love called brutality. This kind of love dictates what the child is to do according to the parent's mood or convenience, in a cold, militant atmosphere. This parent's perspective is the only perspective. He is explosive. The littlest upsets can set him on a rampage of anger and merciless punishment with no hope of compassion, discussion or instruction in right doing. He or she strives to maintain order and obedience with a rod of iron from a forceful, selfish perspective only. This parent also misrepresents the love of God. The children are of a rebellious spirit, and often manifest bitterness. The child mirrors the parent's angry outbursts, attempts physical dominance of siblings or playmates, and does not learn how to show love and patience in difficulties or trials. Or the child is so dominated that he is broken like an animal into submission, and as a result has no will or personality of his own. He does not dare to think for himself, or know how to show godly love or to change his weaknesses. These children will also grow up unfit for heaven. Nor is this type of submission pleasing to God.

Friends, the *only* solution for us and our children is for each of us to learn how to unite vitally with Christ our Saviour, and to eliminate self from our unbalanced perspectives in disciplining. God wants to bring us each from our unbalanced perspectives to the right mixture of firmness: justice with love and mercy. This ideal can be realized only as we come to live and be *in Christ*. In those early morning hours, we must vitally connect with Christ for that day. Such is our opportunity each day, to be grafted as a branch into the vine (see John 15). We choose to connect for that day through consecration, study and communion with our God. Then God empowers us to remain with Christ. God calls out to each of us to warn us of trouble or a trial ahead, and we need to lean on Him to get through it successfully. It is our choice to co-operate, listen and turn to Christ as our Counselor and Saviour throughout each conflict, trial, or misbehavior of our children.

As we choose to seek God's counsel, situation by situation, He will direct and

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instruct us personally how to keep our feelings, anxieties, anger, frustration and despair yielded and subdued. This connection of trusting God can change us inside, and help us to surrender to do what is right, as God has directed us to do, in this situation right now. In this way, self dies. We choose to seek God's counsel: "Lord, what would you have me to do, now?" I make God my head, my Lord and my strength. Then, as I surrender to do as God has directed me, right then, self dies, and Christ lives His life out through me, but only as I co-operate with my free will, choice, and action.

Such an experience must *first be mine.* Then as I learn, I can bring my child to Christ so that he too can learn how to exercise his trust and to surrender to God by choosing to do right and giving obedience to his parent, *in Christ.* He must learn to put his will on God's side, and ask to be changed from being selfish, just as we must learn. Then he, too, can be enabled, through his connection with Christ to say no to his self and yes to God, by right-doing and obeying his mother. Do we not want to be able to have our children know how to come to Christ, how to lay self down, how to co-operate with Christ so that they too can let God change their selfish hearts, their wrong dispositions, desires, feelings, thoughts or behaviors? Surely we do! But this experience must first be ours. See John 17:19. It is the death to self that the Bible tells us about. We need to understand the science of salvation in order to instruct our child in the way.

Be of good courage, parents, and above all else, let us remember, "With God all things are possible." And "Without Christ we can do nothing." Remember Jeremiah 32:27 says: "I am the Lord the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" Have we asked God to be with us in our instructions and corrections to our children, as is our privilege and duty? Christ at my side, instructing me at all times; this is the method of success to correct my child's wrong manners and behaviors, and even my own wrong habits, thoughts, words and deeds. It is all included in the same method: union and communion with and submission to Christ my Saviour.

It is not an easy thing to do. But it is the way we form our own character, by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely and not allow one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected. The impossibility lies within our own will. If we will not, if we choose not to, then we cannot overcome. The real difficulties arise from the corruption of an unsanctified heart and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God. It is the surrender of self, the battle of Ephesians 6:12. This ongoing daily process of the surrender of self can be accomplished only when I am decidedly in Christ, and Christ is at my side. Here, friends, is where the divine unites with the human effort, and by our exercise of choice, we connect with Christ. Old things are here passed away, and all things can become new.

As you can see then, disciplining my child is much more far-reaching and involved than merely correcting or punishing him for his wrong behavior

Friends, as you can see then, disciplining my child is much more far-reaching and involved than merely correcting or punishing him for his wrong behavior. True discipline is bringing my child to Christ, training him how to yield up his will and selfish ways, on his knees before God. It is teaching (instructing the mind what is right) and training (seeing to it that the child exercises his will to do what he knows is right). When he gets up off his knees it is showing him he must now do what he has promised before God. True discipline brings our child to Christ so that Christ can soften and subdue his heart, disposition and will by the divine power from above, as he submits.

Only in this way, through this vital connection and communion with Christ is my child changed on the inside. Through this process the child experiences the joy and power there is in grace. He sees that obedience is possible. It is a joyful experience realizing that God can subdue his wrong feelings, thoughts and desires on the inside, as he submits. Through this experience he also learns that self-serving is not a true, lasting happiness and is really a state of abject slavery. He learns by experience that obeying mother, father and God is his greatest joy and happiness. He learns that with Christ it is real and possible, as long as he chooses, trusts in Jesus and surrenders his self to do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.

Let us apply these principles to a situation to see how it all works practically.

An honest-in-heart, indulgent mother, asked her eight-year old son to rinse and stack the dishes. The child's selfish will was crossed and he took a defiant step back, a non-verbal, "No, I won't." The mother reasoned, coaxed and tried her best to persuade her child to do the small, reasonable task. The boy began crying, acting up, whining and harshly arguing with his mother. His countenance, behavior and words had become most embarrassing. She kindly sat and reasoned with her child for more than thirty minutes, only to increase his defiance, tears and outburst of angry, disrespectful words.

A friend visiting in the home shared with this distraught mother the need for firmness, decision and requiring prompt, cheerful obedience, through a vital connection with Christ. This would change both her feelings and emotions, as well as her son's, on the inside. God can and will subdue these feelings sooner or later. First, the mother needed to connect with Christ, to submit to him her heart and will; then Jesus could instruct her how to bring her son to Him so that he, too, could find the power to obey and true happiness in that obedience.

The following three major principles were shared with the mother before she entered the path of discipline necessary to bring the child to Christ. This discipline is truly disciple-ing one's child to Christ in order to be changed in heart, so that happiness can become a reality.

(1) First, there is a law of the mind which must be understood. "*Great harm is done by a lack of firmness and decision.* I have known parents to say, 'You cannot have this or that,' and then relent, thinking that they may be too strict, and give the child the very thing they at first refused. *A lifelong injury* is thus inflicted. It is an important law of the mind—one which

should not be overlooked—that when a desired object is so *firmly* [not harshly] denied as to remove all hope, the mind will soon cease to long for it and will be occupied in other pursuits. [It yields.] But as long as there is any hope of gaining the desired object, an effort will be made to obtain it." *Child Guidance*, 283–284; all emphasis supplied. At times it may be a superhuman effort like the experience I am relating.

Such was what we saw outworking in the child's behavior. This law is like the law of gravity; it is natural and always happens unless the law is overridden by another law. Unaided by Christ, self will strengthen and rule the child, and self only worsens and wants more and more. Self is never satisfied, to the misery of parents, child and all who are around him, especially when his will is crossed and he knows not how to subdue it in Christ.

(2) Next is counsel to soft, indulgent mothers. *"Even kindness must have its limits.* Authority must be sustained by a firm severity, [not harshness], or it will be received by many with mockery and contempt. The so-called tenderness, the coaxing and the indulgence, used toward youth by parents and guardians is the worst evil which can come upon them. Firmness, decision, positive requirements, are essential in every family. Parents, take up your neglected responsibilities." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 45

(3) Consequences must be meted out promptly. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence [consequences] against an evil work [disobedience] is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil [disobey]."

Is this not what was taking place in this home? How would God govern in this situation? we naturally ask. Proverbs 13:24 says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." And Leviticus 26:14–17 emphasizes over and over the need for firmness and expecting obedience, or else consequences must come *because I love you.* True love will not allow my child to be in bondage to self-serving. True love will not allow my children to be weak in self-control, or in bondage to thinking, "I can't." True love will take them to Christ to be changed in heart and disposition, to be strengthened in Christ and to know that, through a vital connection with the divine and their own choice to co-operate with God, they can have power over self-serving. The Christian's life is more than we take it to be. It does not consist in mere gentleness, patience, meekness and kindliness. These graces are essential (we cannot do without them) but there is need of courage, force, energy and perseverance, the sterner virtues, also. It is not love to raise our children to be weak, nerveless, easily discouraged, and lacking courage to do hard things, like facing self. Our children need Christ in them, and they need to experience the spirit that says confidently, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13

Our children need Christ in them, and they need to experience the spirit that says confidently, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"

Both consecrated themselves to God in prayer, promised to counsel with Him at every step and to listen always for His voice of instruction, in order that God could show how to bring this wayward, unhappy, rebellious child to Christ to be changed in heart and life. They leaned upon God for strength, wisdom and guidance at every step. It was a battle, friends. This older child had never fully, unreservedly surrendered himself before. The child did all he could to resist and rule over the circumstances, just as the law of the mind said self would do, unaided. His self wanted to reign and rule; he was vile in his words and behavior, to the heartbreak of his mother. God did not forsake them; He gave instructions; what to say, what to do, when to pray for the child and when to give consequences for his lack of decision to do right, or for an unwillingness to even obey and come to Jesus in prayer for help. Intercessory prayer was often made aloud for the child as evidence of their love and purpose for his life right now. God worked mightily to direct the child to yield.

After twelve hours and many entreaties, and consequences when he was unwilling to submit and obey, the child finally chose to believe the voice of his mother from the outside, and he chose to believe the voice of Jesus in his mind and heart on the inside. He also chose not to believe those lying thoughts and feelings to the contrary. He willingly submitted and prayed a prayer they led out in, a simple prayer of confession, forgiveness, and a commitment to obey and do those dishes or whatever mother asked him to do. He also asked Jesus to take his naughty heart and give him God's clean, willing heart. Then in faith, he thanked God for changing his heart and answering his prayer. Through the prayer, they observed as his countenance, and voice softened and subdued into a sweet submission. It was a miracle.

The mother's approach to solve this difficulty with the child's will was very different now. She knew her request was reasonable, she was firm and unyielding in expecting obedience to her wishes, and yet, *in Christ* she was without harshness. She made no compromise with evil (disobedience). She did not reason with his unreasonableness, nor his passions. She did not yield her will to meet his unreasonable selfish will because of his loud, obnoxious behavior. Instead she talked with God and did as He said regarding when and how to give her child external motivation to choose the right instead of the wrong. She stated plainly her request for him to come to Jesus to be changed, and encouraged him to choose to do right, which was best. If he refused to choose, he would receive the consequence of disobedience; it was his choice. Neither God nor the mother forced, but a firm love in Christ was ready to do battle with whatever it took in time or effort to keep her child from serving sin and selfishness any longer. Mother discovered this battle was not with flesh and blood alone, but with powers and principalities of darkness, and it made her well aware that she needed Christ at her side and in her heart to battle against a mighty foe successfully. Her son's spiritual life was at stake.

When the child finally saw that his mother was different and would not indulge his selfish way, he submitted to his mother's wishes. But as long as the child felt there was any hope of getting his will and way, he made a superhuman effort to

obtain it. When at last he was convinced his mother would not yield, he chose to heed the voice of God and his mother. It was *his free-will decision* to do what was right and to do those dishes. He then experienced the peace that this surrender brought to his heart. You see, without his choice to surrender to obey, he could not find peace. Why? Because, "Satan takes the control of every mind that is not *decidedly* under the control of the Spirit of God." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 79. Submission to God (the parent stands in Christ's stead) is restoration to oneself, to the power of self-control. God will not force us to do right, but will consistently permit the consequences of our choices. Friends, do you then see that there can be no peace in our children's hearts, our own hearts, or our homes, while the child's selfish will is left to reign? It must be brought into subjection. He must be introduced to that power outside himself (Jesus) that can change him on the inside and enable him to do right; and he must submit to it. This death to self we must all learn about. It is how our child can be restored, re-created into the very image of God, and how the peace of the home be maintained. Now after submission was accomplished the child did the required task cheerfully and well.

Mothers, here we often go astray; we do not insist upon the child's obeying his parents' godly wishes. We draw back from the battle, and as a result self strengthens its hold upon our children, binding them in sin and selfishness. This battle parents must enter into, if they are to maintain a well-ordered, well-disciplined, Christ-centered home, one which will be heavenly, happy, and peaceful.

After this rigorous encounter, the friend read a story entitled "The Battle for One Soul," and the boy identified personally with how the evil angels pressed the tempted soul, how darkness surrounded that soul, how the strong, good angels longed to help the pursued soul, but they must wait until that person willingly cries out for help from God, because Heaven does not force. It is not the work of good angels to control minds against the will of the person. If he yields to the enemy and makes no effort to resist him, then the angels can do nothing. Jesus will not commission holy angels to free those who make no effort to help themselves. But when the pursued soul calls out for help and then co-operates to do right, then the good angels press through the darkness and the evil angels must give back. This child then shared his personal awareness of that darkness, and how he was also aware that the good soldiers were there. Jesus Himself was a mighty soldier he saw in his mind, and Jesus was often calling him to trust and obey his mother. This boy was afraid, was stubborn in giving up his way, but when he finally chose to trust and yield, God gave strength to his submission and hope to his heart. Mothers, this experience was remembered by the child as a loving mother caring for him in a very special way. Is this not *true love*? Bringing our children to Christ to be changed. In most cases if we disciple our child to Christ in this way, the child will eventually say, "My mother loves me so much, she won't let me be naughty or unkind; she's my *special* friend."

Not all situations will be this difficult, mothers. Many will be miraculously easy with Christ. But for those hard times I encourage you by this illustration to persevere, whatever it takes to bring your child to Christ to surrender himself. God will be with you; listen for His instructions to you personally.

Parents, we will all have to die to self, daily and hourly, in order to come from our unbalanced perspectives of disciplining to the perfect blend of justice and mercy in Christ. May we choose to let self die; may we choose to unite with Christ, to make this surrender possible so that God may use us to reach out to our poor children and show them the way to let self die through uniting themselves to Christ also. May we learn to hear God's voice speaking directly to our hearts and minds that He may personally instruct us how to come ourselves and to bring our children to Jesus in order to be changed from serving selfishness to serving holiness, *in Christ Jesus.* □

Without his choice to surrender to obey, he could not find peace. Why? Because, "Satan takes the control of every mind that is not *decidedly* under the control of the Spirit of God"

Enoch walked with God three hundred years previous to his translation, and the state of the world was not more favorable for the perfection of Christian character then than it is today. How did Enoch walk with God? He educated his mind and heart to ever feel the presence of God, and when in perplexity his prayers would ascend to God to keep him, to teach him His will. "What shall I do to honor Thee, my God?" was his prayer. His will was merged in the will of God, and his feet were constantly directed in the path of God's commandments. Enoch was a representative of those who shall be on the earth when Christ shall come, who will be translated to heaven and never taste of death. It is fitting that we pray, as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."—*The Signs of the Times*, vol. 2, 175

Presenting God's Plan to Restore the Family

DOES anyone doubt that the family is in crisis in the 1990s? But who knows what to do about it? Many people are attempting to provide sage advice as better-marriage and child-management books proliferate and as family counseling centers do a thriving business.

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SPEAKER	Video#	TOPIC(S)
Jim Hohnberger	Tape 1	"Ready for the Hour: Unprepared for the Moment"; "Issues, Issues, *the* Issue"
$20/tape $50/set	Tape 2	"Dead to Self, Alive to Christ"; "Let No Man Separate"
	Tape 3	"Living Faith"; "Speak, Lord, for Thy Servant Heareth"
	Tape 4	"Redeeming the Time"
Tom Waters	Tape 1	"Husband and Wife Communication"; "Self Government"
$20/tape $30/set	Tape 2	"Evil Surmising, Beneficial Devisings"; "Christ Our Constant Companion"
Alane Waters	Tape 1	"Redemptive Discipline"; "Finance and Indebtedness"
$20/tape $30/set	Tape 2	"Family Recreation"; "Family Worship"

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